



News release

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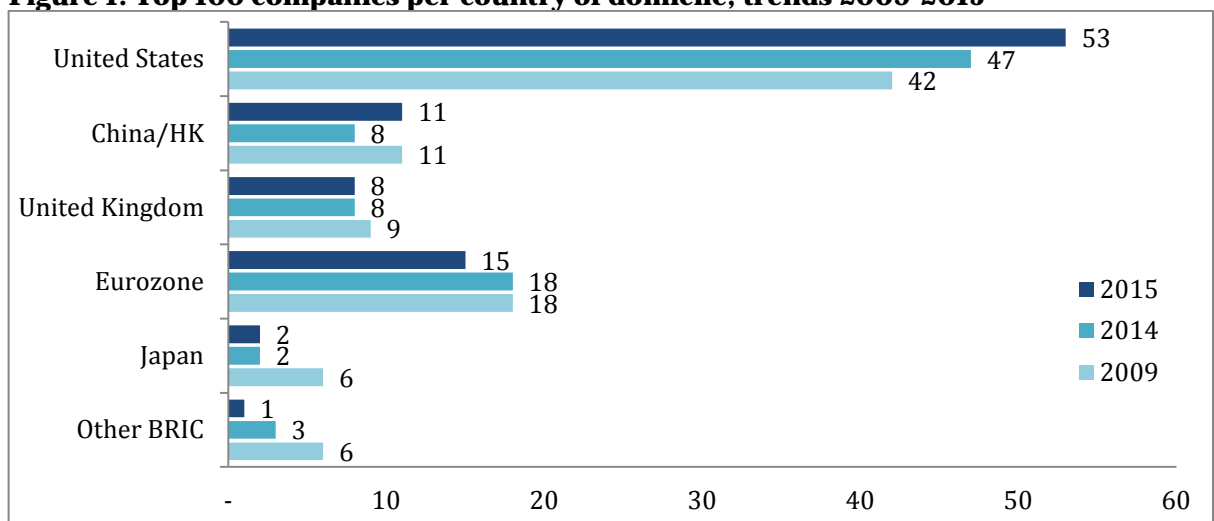
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Apple and US companies extend their leading positions in the Top 100

PwC’s global market capitalisation study of the leading listed 100 companies shows that getting into the Top 100 and staying in the Top 100 is no easy task.

- US companies are extending their leading position, with over half of the world’s Top 100 listed companies coming from America (53). China/HK now has the second most companies (11) with the UK in third place (8).
- Apple retains its crown as the world’s most valuable company (\$725bn) increasing its market capitalisation by 54% (+\$256bn) compared to last year, and despite returning \$56bn to shareholders in 2014. It is now almost twice as big as the second largest company (Google \$375bn) and almost 10 times larger than the smallest in the Top 100.
- The entry point for the Top 100 is now \$85bn compared with \$45bn in 2009, with the average market capitalisation of a Top 100 company now \$162bn compared with \$84bn in 2009.
- The Chinese internet giant, Alibaba went straight into the Top 100 with a market cap of \$168bn at IPO increasing to \$205bn at 31 March 2015.

Figure 1: Top 100 companies per country of domicile, trends 2009-2015





Now in its fourth consecutive year leading the Top 100, Apple's success is unparalleled. At \$725bn the company's market cap increased by 54% (+\$256bn) compared to last year (\$469bn). This extraordinary growth was achieved despite the company paying out \$56bn in 2014 to shareholders and has extended the gap between them and 2nd placed Google (\$375bn).

The United States now boasts over half of the world's Top 100 most valuable companies with 53 companies compared to 42 five years ago and 47 last year; seven out of the top 10 companies are American.

China/Hong Kong and the UK have remained stable (respectively 11 and 8 companies), while the other BRIC nations fell from 6 to 1 and the Eurozone from 18 to 15. This reflects current investor sentiment in those markets and the fact that these companies have still to emerge beyond their domestic markets with a global presence.

Overall 34 companies have dropped out since 2009 (28 through falls in value, 6 by acquisition merger or separation). Of the 34 which have joined the index, 29 were through growth, while five entered through IPO or demerger: Alibaba (#22), Facebook (#17), Agricultural Bank of China (#29), Kinder Morgan (#90) and the spin-off of AbbVie from Abbott (#86).

Companies classified in Tech and Financial sectors are the biggest risers since 2009. Businesses from the Utilities industry (4 companies in 2009) have fallen out of the global Top 100 as at 31 March 2015. The technology sector has continued to propel companies' forward, fuelling their growth in a global context, rising from sixth to second highest by market cap when the index is broken down into business sectors. In 2009, 11 tech firms were worth a combined \$997bn. In 2015, the market cap of the 12 tech companies surveyed had rocketed to \$2.8trn.

Clifford Tompsett, capital markets partner at PwC, said:

"The US has increased its domination of the ranking - seven of the top 10 and 13 of the top 20 are American. Looking at these companies, the likes of Apple, Google, Microsoft, Berkshire Hathaway and Facebook, it is apparent their success has been driven by innovation and their global reach. US corporates have also more aggressively used their scale and relatively higher valuations to increase their growth through strategic acquisitions.

"With these advantages, risk appetite and drive, other countries will have their work cut out to compete with the US on the same level."

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