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RETAIL GIANT WALMART RETAINS TOP SPOT AND GOOGLE CLIMBS TO SECOND PLACE AS THE WORLD'S TOP 500 BRANDS ARE ANNOUNCED

- **The Top 500 most valuable brands in the world have grown in value by 26% to US\$2,873 billion.**
- **The Enterprise Value of the top 500 brands has grown by 16% to US\$18,664 billion.**
- **Walmart holds its position as the most valuable global brand**
- **Santander and Apple make huge leaps in brand value**

The winners and losers in the global brand war have been announced, with Google climbing, Microsoft slipping back and Coca-Cola extending its advantage over main rival Pepsi.

Retail giant Walmart, whose brand value increased 2% this year, retains top spot in the annual survey, published by Brand Finance plc, the world's leading brand valuation consultancy.

Google, which has risen in the table from number five to number two, shares top ten status with other technology brands including IBM (4), Microsoft (5) and hp (9). GE, HSBC, Vodafone and Toyota complete the top ten.

Suffering most were non-essential sectors like airlines and retail. Of the top five airline brands, only Singapore Airlines, which came out top in that sector, climbed the table. The biggest airline 'fallers' were Japan Airlines, American Airlines and British Airways, down 181, 169 and 117 places respectively.

In the retail sector, excluding Walmart, the picture is grim. The only other retailers to climb in the top ten retail brands were Walmart owned ASDA, up from 107th to 80th; H&M, which rose from 146th to 93rd and Home Depot, which is up from 24th to 21st in the overall Global 500. McDonald's remains the second most valuable retail brand, despite slipping from 12th to 17th in the Global 500.

Tesco, which has aspirations of international expansion itself, is listed in the food sector rather than retail but saw its brand value rise by a significantly higher rate than Walmart – up 26% to US\$20.7 billion; however, its brand value remains only half that of its American rival.

Of the 'new' iconic brands, every businessman's favourite accessory, Blackberry, appears in the Global 500 for the first time whilst Apple has climbed from 27th to 19th with a 45% increase in its brand value. Santander, the Spanish banking group, rises from 41st to 12th increasing in brand value by 136%.

"During the recession value-for-money brands have done well including Walmart, Coca Cola, Tesco to name a few. Many luxury brands have slipped but a small number of iconic luxury brands have done remarkably well for example Christian Dior and Porsche" explains David Haigh, CEO of Brand Finance plc.

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About Brand Finance Global 500

Brand Finance first issued its global report into the relative equity of the 250 top global brands back in 2007. In 2008, the study was extended to analyse the top 500 brands worldwide. The Global 500 report is published annually and incorporates data from all listed companies globally. Each brand is accorded a brand rating: a benchmarking study of the strength, risk and future potential of a brand relative to its competitor set as well as a brand value: a summary measure of the financial strength of the brand.

About Brand Finance

Brand Finance plc, the world's leading brand valuation consultancy, advises strongly branded organisations on maximising their brand value through effective management of their brands and intangible assets. Founded in 1996, Brand Finance has performed thousands of branded business, brand and intangible asset valuations worth trillions of dollars.

Its clients include international brand owners, tax authorities, Intellectual Property lawyers and investment banks. Its work is frequently peer-reviewed by the big four audit practices and its reports have been accepted by various regulatory bodies, including the UK Takeover Panel.

Brand Finance is headquartered in London and has a network of international offices in Amsterdam, Athens, Bangalore, Barcelona, Cape Town, Colombo, Dubai, Geneva, Helsinki, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Lisbon, Madrid, Moscow, New York, Paris, Sao Paulo, Sydney, Singapore, Toronto and Zagreb.