Top Worldwide Brands

Companies are beginning to recognize that brands are among their most valuable assets. Brands account for about one-third of the value of Fortune 500 companies.

We look at this year's BrandZ rankings and what the most valuable brands are.

This year's BrandZ Ranking proves that brands are becoming ever more powerful in driving shareholder value.

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 twice 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 $70.9bn.

The biggest risers in the ranking include Apple at 130th with the biggest dollar increase in the Top 100 list, and BlackBerry, that entered the BrandZ Ranking at number 91 thanks to a brand value increase of 356%.

Interesting trends from this year's BrandZ Ranking include:

1. Established Asia vs Emerging Asia — Chinese brands continue to get stronger according to the new BrandZ Ranking. Seven brands in this year'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 $103bn). In contrast, the value of the four Chinese brands that made this year's BrandZ Top 100 increased by 51% (to $126bn). 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.

2. Continued Rise of the BRICs — Emerging markets play a key role in driving growth for international brands. For example Apple and Gucci. In addition, 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 $8.3bn. 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.

3. Technology Boom — The technology sector (including mobile operators), which accounted for 28 of the Top 100 brands, outperformed all other categories in this year's BrandZ Ranking, with a brand value growth of $387bn. This is more than half of the Top 100's total increase. Source: Millward Brown Optimor (including data from brands, Datamonitor, and Bloomberg)

Google

1st▪Google

The search and advertising giant google extends it's lead at the top of the branding league through the introduction of successful online applications such as Google Docs and Google Mail.

GE

2nd▪G.E. (General Electric)

General Electric continues to grow, with it's long history and large number of businesses, it won't be disappearing any time soon.

The Rankings in detail:

Microsoft

3rd▪Microsoft

Vista may have flopped but Microsoft is still going strong with growth almost being on a par with Google.

Coca-Cola

4th▪Coca-Cola

Still the dominant leader in the Soft Drinks market and one of the most recognizable brands in the world.

中国移动通信 CHINA MOBILE

5th▪China Mobile

Well known in Asia, China Mobile is the largest mobile phone operator in China. It is the world's largest mobile phone operator ranked by number of subscribers, with 465 million customers.

Apple

7th▪Apple

Apple enjoyed 125% brand value change in 2008, close to 50% more than anyone else in the top 20. The iPhone has helped Apple spread into new profitable markets.

McDonald's

8th▪McDonald's

The world's largest fast-food chain's brand continues to grow with the expansion of its menus attracting new demographics.

NOKIA

9th▪Nokia

Though the iPhone has become one of the most popular handsets, Nokia still has a healthy market share due to the iPhone's cost.

The Top 100 Brands

1▪Google
2▪G.E. (General Electric)
3▪Microsoft
4▪Coca-Cola
5▪China Mobile
6▪IBM
7▪Apple
8▪McDonald's
9▪Nokia
10▪Marlboro
11▪Google
12▪Toyota
13▪Wal-Mart
14▪Bank of America
15▪Citi
16▪HP
17▪Gillette
18▪ICBC
19▪Louis Vuitton
20▪American Express
21▪Mobile Tango
22▪Cisco
23▪Disney
24▪UPS
25▪Nescs
26▪Oracle
27▪Intel
28▪Hyundai
29▪SAP
30▪Gillette
31▪China Construction
32▪Bank of China
33▪Amazon Wireless
34▪Royal Bank of Canada
35▪HSBC
36▪Mercedes
37▪Honda
38▪Citibank
39▪Pepsi
40▪Home Depot
41▪Dell
42▪Deutsche Bank
43▪MSN
44▪Carrefour
45▪MTS (vo Cable
46▪Target
47▪Siemens
48▪Banco Santander
49▪Accenture
50▪Orange
51▪Blackberry
52▪Chase
53▪Nike
54▪Canon
55▪AT&T
56▪Starbucks
57▪Goldman Sachs
58▪Samsung
59▪Nissan
60▪Wells Fargo
61▪Amazon
62▪Yahoo!
63▪Morgan Stanley
64▪LEE
65▪eBay
66▪H&M
67▪Motorola
68▪Ford
69▪Chevrolet
70▪Budweiser
71▪Colgate
72▪Harley Davidson
73▪Subway
74▪Merrill Lynch
75▪JP Morgan
76▪Hermès
77▪IBM
78▪Zara
79▪Channel
80▪IKEA
81▪Ebay
82▪Telefónica
83▪MTS
84▪Zara
85▪Sport
86▪CNN
87▪Kia
88▪Adobe
89▪Nokia
90▪Mastercard
91▪Standard Chartered Bank

The 10 best gadgets for Christmas

Our pick of the best 10 gadgets everyone will want to find on their Christmas stocking in 2008

Start mulling the wine and stocking up on tinsel - Christmas is just around the corner. Despite all the doom and gloom of the credit crunch, it's been a bumper year for gadgets.

Consumer electronics are falling in price all the time, and there's something out there to suit all tastes and budgets. There's still plenty of time to track down the perfect gift for tech-savvy family and friends, but if you're stuck for ideas, take a look at our list of the top 10 gadgets everyone hopes they'll find under the tree this Christmas:

1. Sony Rolly

This year's ultimate novelty gadget, the Sony Rolly has been a smash hit in Japan, and it's finally upon, rolled and skimmed its way across to the UK. In many ways, Rolly is little more than a glorified portable speaker, but he is incredibly entertaining. Load songs onto Rolly and watch in awe as he spins into life, flashing his lights and dancing along to the music.

You can also beam songs to Rolly from your mobile phone via Bluetooth. Rolly comes complete with choreography software, so you can design dance routines for him to perform in time to your favourite tracks. Expensive, but utterly captivating.

Perfect for: teenagers
Price: £249.99
http://www.sonyrolly.co.uk

2. Flip Ultra

This little pocket-sized camcorder took the US by storm when it launched there earlier this year, and it's easy to see why. Perfect for the YouTube generation and the technologically challenged, the Flip Ultra's greatest selling point is its simplicity. With one-touch recording and a decent digital zoom, the Ultra can store up to 60 mins of footage on its 2GB internal memory. It uses AA batteries, too, so you'll never run out of juice. Video and sound quality is surprisingly good, but the piece de resistance is the film-editing software stored on the Flip that automatically runs whenever you plug the camcorder into your computer. Editing your footage is a doddle, and the Flip Ultra makes a great stocking filler.

Perfect for: budding film makers
Price: £79.99
http://www.amazon.co.uk

3. Asus Eee PC 900

Netbooks are this year's gadget phenomenon, emerging from nowhere to become one of the biggest selling computer categories on the market. These ultralight, ultra-portable laptops offer little in the way of storage, but are perfect for writing emails and surfing the internet on the go. Asus's Eee PC range is the pick of the bunch, opt for the version running the streamlined Linux operating system to boost the speed performance of your machine. This Eee PC has a 9in screen, built-in Wi-Fi and webcam, 20GB of storage, 1GB of RAM and plenty of USB ports as well as a memory card reader.

Perfect for: students and road warriors
Price: £269.29
http://www.misco.co.uk

4. Mech BC

The Mech BC is a pre-assembled, fully programmable robot that can be built to your will. While it's unlikely it will be able to take over Christmas cooking duties, the Mech BC can be made to dance, stomp around and play music through his integrated speaker. It comes with software so you can program new moves, and the whole process is incredibly intuitive. Bags of fun and educational to boot.

Perfect for: youngsters looking to make the step up from Lego
Price: £199
http://www.bioloid.com

5. iPod touch

The iPod touch is a powerful personal multimedia player that's great for watching videos on as well as listening to music. You can surf the internet whenever you're in a Wi-Fi hot spot, and download a host of clever, useful applications to the device, such as restaurant guides and translation tools. It's also a mean portable games device, with graphics that give the PlayStation Portable a run for its money. Lots of high-profile publishers are making games for the iPod touch that take advantage of its touch-screen and motion-sensing accelerometer, making it one of the best entertainment devices around.

Price: £169
http://www.apple.com/ipt

6. Klipsch Image earphones

These in-ear headphones are so incredibly comfortable and lightweight that you'll forget you're even wearing them. The earbuds mould to nearly fit your ears, providing a rich music-listening experience, with lovely, crisp tones even when listening at low volumes. These headphones are pricey, but worth every penny, and perform equally well whether you're listening to music as you pace it out on the treadmill or commuting on the Tube.

Perfect for: audiophiles
Price: £165.95
http://www.hifiheadphones.co.uk

7. Wii Fit

This exercise game from Nintendo encourages players to get into shape through a series of mini-games and fitness programs, guided by on-screen instructors. Improve your strength, balance and flexibility with Yoga exercises on the balance board, and give your heart a workout with the running races and aerobic tasks. A great way to work off the Christmas turkey - but muscles are lost, so you'll have to drop surrey to get your hands on one.

Perfect for: the whole family
Price: £100
http://www.game.co.uk

8. Pure Evoke Flow

This beautiful looking radio combines the best of DAB digital radio with an entire internet's worth of talk shows, foreign language stations, niche music channels and surprising finds. Just connect it to your home Wi-Fi network, use the online programme planner to download a list of stations to the device, and listen away. You can even hook it up to your iPod or MP3 player, and use it to stream the music library stored on your computer.

Perfect for: fans of the Archers, homesick expats
Price: £146.76
http://www.superfi.co.uk

9. Olympus Mju 1030sw

Solidly built and fantastically robust, the Mju is a triumph of engineering. This 10-megapixel digital camera is waterproof to a depth of 10m, will survive a fall of 2m, and is crushproof up to a weight of 100kg. But this is not a case of brawn over brains - the Mju offers all the bells and whistles we've come to expect from digital cameras, including image-stabilisation, face-detection and red-eye reduction. Pressproof, scratchproof and capable of producing great shots.

Perfect for: action men, adventurers
Price: £209
http://www.ukdigital.co.uk

10. Nintendo DS

Nintendo has sold a staggering 97 million DS consoles worldwide, and once you've played one, it's not hard to see why. The touch-screen DS is ideally suited for on-the-go gaming, and there's a fantastic library of games to choose from. Whether you want to hone your mental agility with titles such as Dr Kawashima's Brain Training, take care of a virtual pet with Nintendogs, or simply appreciate the zany charm of Lego Batman, this console has something to offer everyone.

Perfect for: people of all ages
Price: £99.99
http://www.amazon.co.uk

Gadgets

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Vintage Magazine—Brand and Gadget Spreads