

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:00 P.M. ET,
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FORBES' GLOBAL 2000: STRONG OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTMENT DESPITE SLUMPING STOCK MARKETS

Fifth Annual List Ranks World's Leading Public Companies in 60 Countries

New York, NY (April 2, 2008) — *Forbes* has announced this year's **Global 2000 (p. 127)**, the magazine's annual guide to the biggest companies in the world. The 2008 rankings demonstrate how much international business has changed since *Forbes* launched this list in 2004. The U.S. still dominates, but with 61 fewer entries than last year, as many U.S. companies failed to keep pace with global competitors. Royal Dutch Shell saw the biggest increase in absolute profit gain since last year, while General Motors had the biggest loss, \$39 billion in 2007. This year, telecom and trading companies showed the biggest increases in profits, while financial companies have taken a significant hit. Other highlights include:

- Total sales among the Global 2000 totaled \$30 trillion.
- In a credit crunch, blue chip stocks like Microsoft and ExxonMobil should thrive.
- The bull run in natural resources has helped Third World miners in countries such as Brazil.
- 32 Japanese companies dropped off this year's list, partially a result of a 7% drop in their stock market so far in 2008.
- Wal-Mart leads in one-year gains in employees.
- Total Global 2000 profits rose 8%.
- 242 companies have dropped off since last year, and half of the original 25 biggest companies listed in 2004 have dropped in rank.
- The median aftertax profit per employee for the world's biggest companies is \$37,800.

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For expanded tables, highlights, slideshows and more, visit: www.forbes.com/forbes2000

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

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