

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 6:00 P.M. EDT,  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8**

## **FORBES ANNOUNCES THE WORLD'S BEST COMPANIES**

*Who is Most Likely to Survive Today, Thrive Tomorrow, and Where the Recovery Will Begin*

**New York, NY (April 8, 2009)** — Even a depression is a place for opportunity – if you have cash, scale, and ambition: Forbes has announced “The World’s Best Companies,” ranking the biggest and most profitable companies on the planet (p. 102). Many of the names on this year’s list will emerge strong when the world economies snap back. The list reveals the dynamism of global business, spanning 62 countries. The U.S. is still dominant at 551 members, but that is 200 fewer than when the list was first published. Forbes’ “Global 2000” ranks companies by sales, profits, assets and market value. This year’s package includes:

- The Top 100: Despite a 74% drop in price, General Electric is the world’s largest company.
- Banks still dominate with 307 firms on the list, due, in large measure to their asset totals.
- The oil and gas industry scores high in sales, profits and stock market value.
- Royal Dutch Shell saw sales grow 29% in 2008, and moved past Wal-Mart and ExxonMobil to be #1 in sales for the past year.
- Just four years ago there was stability among sales and profit leaders. But asset giants are mostly new, and three Chinese firms have replaced U.S. firms atop the market value list.
- ExxonMobil is still the world’s most profitable company: in 2008 it earned \$45 billion.
- Wind turbine specialist Vestas, profiled in this issue of *Forbes*, has seen its sales grow by 30% annually for the last five years.
- Research in Motion of Canada has the best annualized sales growth over the past five years at 78%.

**Best Countries for Business (p. 151)** – Forbes’ fourth annual ranking is a good indication of which nations will be in a better position than others to rebound from the current downturn.

**No More Excuses (p. 120)** – Meet the man who must keep Siemens afloat and moving forward, even as the 161-year-old German engineering conglomerate faces slow prospects in both its home market and abroad.

**Blade Runner (p. 104)** – Generations of wind companies have soared and crashed as federal incentives fluctuated with the political currents. In this profile of Vestas Wind Systems, learn why its CEO thinks the U.S. has the best wind resources in the world.

**For more stories, expanded tables, and video, visit [www.forbes.com/global2000](http://www.forbes.com/global2000) after 6 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, April 8.**

### **ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:**

**The Banker Who Said No (p. 94)** – While U.S. bankers lent recklessly during the boom, there was one who hoarded his money. Meet Andy Beal, who is now cleaning up – without a shred of government assistance.

**Alive and Kicking: Soccer Valuations (p. 34)** – Soccer’s top franchises rose in value again this year, thanks to long-term TV deals and on-field success. Forbes ranks the most valuable teams in soccer. Visit: [www.forbes.com/soccer](http://www.forbes.com/soccer) after 6 p.m. EDT on Wednesday, April 8.

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