

Reputation

## America's Most Reputable Companies

Klaus Kneale, 04.29.09, 12:01 AM EDT

The Reputation Institute just released its annual survey that determines the nation's most respected companies. Google is no longer on top.



Would you recommend that a friend buy medicine from **Johnson & Johnson**? Insurance from **AIG**? Do you trust **Google**? These are the kinds of questions people answered about 153 American companies for the Reputation Institute, a private research and consulting firm. The [Reputation Institute](#) ranked these companies on how esteemed, admired, trusted and liked each was, based on its surveys of the general public.

As it turned out, As it turned out, ( [JNJ - news - people](#) ) blew the others out of the water. Its pulse score, a 0 to 100 rating, was 83.58. That is 2.49 higher than [Kraft Foods](#) ( [KFT - news - people](#) ), which ranked second on the list.

Johnson & Johnson has bounced around in the top 10 for a several around in the top 10 for a several years now. It tumbled from second place in 2006 to fourth in 2007. It jumped back up to second last year. This year, its pulse score is up just 0.10 (a statistically insignificant change). So it may have to thank [Google](#) ( [GOOG - news - people](#) ) for relinquishing the top spot to it.

Google ranked first last year, but that wasn't really Johnson & Johnson's doing. Google's pulse score fell more than six points, from 85.23 to 78.80. The tumble dropped Google to eighth place. In fact, you have to look at the bottom 20 on the list just to find a larger drop in score. Still, having the eighth best reputation in the U.S. is nothing to complain about.

How does the ranking work? The Reputation Institute collected survey data on 600 companies globally, gathering its U.S. data in January and February. Only individuals in a company's home country and familiar with the company could rate it. So Americans rated only American companies they knew about.

This might have slanted things a little, since many Americans aren't too keen on anyone in their banking and finance industry right now. The three largest drops in pulse scores were [AIG](#) ( [AIG - news - people](#) ) (-27.52), [Goldman Sachs](#) ( [GS - news - people](#) ) (-17.31), and [Morgan Stanley](#) ( [MS - news - people](#) ) (-13.11).

Not surprisingly, AIG dropped almost to the very bottom of the list. However, it still doesn't have as poor a reputation as [Halliburton](#) ( [HAL - news - people](#) ). Halliburton was up 3.48 this year, to 27.47.

Biggest Losers	2009 Pulse	2008 Pulse	Change
AIG	34.27	61.79	-27.52
Goldman Sachs	49.81	67.12	-17.31
Morgan Stanley	52.20	65.31	-13.11
Pacific Gas and Electric	51.91	63.81	-11.91
<b>General Motors</b> ( GM - news - people )	55.63	63.07	-7.44
<b>Citigroup</b> ( C - news - people )	46.00	53.40	-7.40
Google	78.80	85.23	-6.44
Chubb	59.58	64.88	-5.30
<b>Hartford Financial Services</b> ( HIG - news - people )	61.34	66.16	-4.82
<b>Xerox</b> ( XRX - news - people )	73.82	78.44	-4.62

Two newcomers to the list were the online retailer Amazon and the hygiene products company **Kimberly-Clark** ( KMB - news people ). Kimberly starts strong at 14th, with a pulse score of 77.47, and Amazon ranked 20th, with a pulse score of 75.74.

You might wonder why this or that company isn't part of the list. The Reputation Institute focused solely on companies engaged in commercial activities and with reasonably high familiarity among the public. Wholly owned subsidiaries weren't included either.

Ultimately, reputations among American companies are relatively stable. Some 75% of the companies on the list underwent changes of less than five to their pulse scores. In fact, median reputation among American companies has gone up in the last year from 64.54 to 66.31.

Reputation Institute data show that a good reputation is good for business. Among the companies in the top 10 on the list, six of 10 people would recommend them to others. Among those in the bottom 10, only two would put in a good word, while three would outright boycott the company.

You had better watch your reputation.

It's not all bad for financials, though. A few in the sector saw significant reputation gains this year. **Bank of America** ( BAC - news - people ) (+7.96) and **US Bancorp** ( USB - news - people ) (+8.28) had some of the biggest jumps on the list.

Even those bounds were dwarfed by **Wal-Mart** ( WMT - news - people ) and **Dow Chemical** ( DOW - news - people ), though. Wal-Mart moved up 12.16 to a pulse score of 65.17. Without this rise, Wal-Mart would have been ranked 142nd, but its boost in reputation brought it to 84th place--a very impressive change within one year.

Dow Chemical gets the prize for most improved overall, though. The company's pulse score came in at 63.95, a full 13.31 points ahead of its score from last year. That got it to 97th on the list. Patti Temple Rocks, Dow vice president for global public affairs, brand and reputation, says, "We attribute this in part to the comprehensive brand and reputation-building efforts the company has undertaken in the past several years. We are looking forward to continued positive trajectory in 2010."

Biggest Gainers	2009 Pulse	2008 Pulse	Change
Dow Chemical	63.95	50.64	13.31
Wal-Mart	65.17	53.01	12.16
<b>TJX Companies</b> ( TJX - news - people )	64.69	55.35	9.33
Koch USA	68.90	60.48	8.41
US Bancorp	62.46	54.18	8.28
<b>Altria</b> ( MO - news - people )	52.50	44.31	8.19
Bank of America	58.90	50.94	7.96
Sears	69.45	61.80	7.66
<b>Microsoft</b> ( MSFT - news - people )	78.05	70.52	7.53
<b>Verizon Communications</b> ( VZ - news - people )	63.53	56.25	7.28

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## America's Most Reputable Companies: The Rankings

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Here's how the 153 American companies rated in the Reputation Institute's annual survey fared.

COMPANY	2009 RANK	GLOBAL PULSE SCORE		
		2009	2008	CHANGE
Johnson & Johnson	1	83.58	83.48	0.10
Kraft Foods	2	81.09	82.79	-1.70
UPS	3	80.84	81.05	-0.21
General Mills	4	80.80	81.34	-0.54
FedEx	5	80.30	76.28	4.01
Whirlpool	6	79.86	74.41	5.45
Walt Disney Company	7	79.44	81.22	-1.78
Google	8	78.80	85.23	-6.44
Caterpillar	9	78.69	74.78	3.91
Costco Wholesale	10	78.53	74.33	4.20
Microsoft	11	78.05	70.52	7.53
3M	12	77.88	79.79	-1.90
Colgate-Palmolive	13	77.65	78.04	-0.38
Kimberly-Clark	14	77.47	New	New
Procter & Gamble	15	77.08	72.85	4.23
PepsiCo	16	76.69	72.76	3.94
General Electric	17	76.20	76.82	-0.63
Apple	18	76.15	75.42	0.73
Kroger	19	75.89	69.96	5.93
Amazon.com	20	75.74	New	New
Lowe's (Home Improvement)	21	75.33	71.76	3.57
Berkshire Hathaway	22	75.03	73.58	1.44
Publix Super Markets	23	75.02	74.91	0.11
Texas Instruments	24	74.70	77.22	-2.52
Hewlett-Packard	25	74.59	75.10	-0.51
John Deere	26	74.47	76.12	-1.66
Kohl's	27	74.37	69.31	5.06
Coca-Cola Company	28	74.33	74.24	0.09
Meijer	29	74.05	67.38	6.67
Xerox	30	73.82	78.44	-4.62
JC Penney	31	73.68	69.92	3.77
Goodyear	32	73.45	76	-2.55
Cisco	33	73.44	67.75	5.69
IBM	34	73.25	72.39	0.86
Dell	35	73.22	74.26	-1.04
Best Buy	36	72.44	72.08	0.37
Toys 'R' Us	37	72.27	72.86	-0.59
Walgreen	38	72.21	73.01	-0.80
Weyhaeuser	39	72.19	New	New
Medtronic	40	72.17	New	New
Target	41	71.74	67.38	4.36
Union Pacific Railroad	42	71.40	67.30	4.10
Home Depot	43	71.06	71.49	-0.43

COMPANY	2009 RANK	GLOBAL PULSE SCORE		
		2009	2008	CHANGE
Intel	44	70.53	74.94	-4.40
DuPont	45	70.46	New	New
Staples	46	70.40	72.01	-1.61
Office Depot	47	70.29	72.59	-2.30
Aflac	48	70.15	71.59	-1.44
Motorola	49	70.01	69.20	0.81
Rite Aid	50	69.85	65.92	3.93
Boeing	51	69.84	74.37	-4.54
Nike	52	69.69	71.47	-1.78
Sears	53	69.45	61.80	7.66
Abbott Laboratories	54	69.40	62.26	7.14
State Farm Insurance	55	69.21	66.87	2.34
Koch USA	56	68.90	60.48	8.41
Tyson Foods	57	68.78	69.04	-0.26
CBS Broadcasting	58	68.70	67.06	1.64
Burlington Northern Santa Fe Corporation (BNSF Railway)	59	68.68	New	New
Alcoa	60	68.40	67.58	0.82
Honeywell International	61	68.27	69.79	-1.53
McKesson	62	68.09	New	New
Wyeth	63	68.07	61.30	6.77
Bristol-Myers Squibb	64	67.99	62.87	5.13
Murphy Oil	65	67.91	New	New
CVS Caremark	66	67.88	71.14	-3.26
US Postal Service	67	67.66	62.37	5.29
Northrop Grumman	68	67.62	66.34	1.28
Emerson Electric	69	67.35	63.98	3.37
Allstate	70	67.20	60.43	6.77
ONEOK	71	67.16	New	New
United Technologies	72	66.94	New	New
Cardinal Health	73	66.76	New	New
Supervalu	74	66.46	60.47	5.99
Southern Company	75	66.33	65.69	0.64
Computer Sciences Corporation	76	66.28	New	New
Prudential	77	66.15	61.12	5.03
American Express	78	66.09	64.76	1.33
Medco Health Solutions	79	65.91	New	New
Safeway	80	65.81	69.16	-3.36
Amgen	81	65.72	61.06	4.66
AT&T	82	65.71	63.19	2.52
Oracle	83	65.61	64.32	1.29
Wal-Mart	84	65.17	53.01	12.16
Pfizer	85	64.82	62.87	1.95
Lockheed Martin	86	64.76	68.65	-3.89
American Airlines	87	64.71	60.67	4.04
TJX Companies	88	64.69	55.35	9.33
Hess	89	64.61	62.42	2.19
Ford	90	64.56	61.33	3.23
General Dynamics	91	64.56	New	New
Merck	92	64.49	62.34	2.15
American Electric	93	64.46	61.92	2.54
Textron	94	64.29	New	New
Eli Lilly	95	64.27	65.41	-1.14
Macy's	96	64.18	New	New
Dow Chemical	97	63.95	50.64	13.31
Wells Fargo	98	63.90	57.38	6.51

COMPANY	2009 RANK	GLOBAL PULSE SCORE		
		2009	2008	CHANGE
Verizon Communications	99	63.53	56.25	7.28
International Paper	100	63.44	62.43	1.00
AES	101	63.27	63.09	0.19
Gap	102	62.98	60.46	2.52
Progressive	103	62.92	59	3.93
WellPoint	104	62.78	New	New
McDonald's	105	62.71	58.53	4.19
Raytheon	106	62.60	64.90	-2.30
Delta Air Lines	107	62.46	59.52	2.95
US Bancorp	108	62.46	54.18	8.28
MetLife	109	62.36	65.06	-2.70
Tyco International Ltd. .	110	62.02	58.62	3.40
CIGNA	111	61.99	56.09	5.90
Time Warner	112	61.92	55.51	6.40
The Hartford Financial Services Group	113	61.34	66.16	-4.82
Liberty Mutual Insurance	114	60.87	62.65	-1.78
Aetna	115	60.78	60.46	0.32
Travelers	116	60.37	New	New
United Airlines	117	60.12	58.35	1.77
UnitedHealth Group	118	59.97	New	New
FPL GROUP (Florida Power & Light)	119	59.87	New	New
JPMorgan Chase	120	59.82	61.03	-1.21
Continental Airlines	121	59.78	61.98	-2.19
Chubb	122	59.58	64.88	-5.30
Viacom	123	59.34	New	New
SunTrust Banks	124	59.29	63.56	-4.28
Bank of America	125	58.90	50.94	7.96
Bank of New York Mellon	126	58.80	New	New
News Corporation	127	58.41	59.63	-1.23
Manpower	128	58.29	New	New
Sunoco	129	58.17	58.98	-0.81
Hospital Corporation of America (HCA)	130	57.63	New	New
Marathon Oil	131	57.32	52.82	4.50
Valero Energy	132	57.31	53.29	4.02
Capital One Financial	133	56.37	51.58	4.79
ConocoPhillips	134	56.37	49.72	6.65
Humana	135	56.31	New	New
General Motors	136	55.63	63.07	-7.44
Archer Daniels Midland	137	55.45	54.13	1.31
Comcast	138	54.93	50.67	4.26
Qwest Communications	139	54.58	54.73	-0.14
Sprint Nextel	140	53.94	50.80	3.14
AutoNation	141	53.60	50.67	2.93
DirecTV	142	53.35	53.94	-0.58
Altria	143	52.50	44.31	8.19
Morgan Stanley	144	52.20	65.31	-13.11
Pacific Gas and Electric Company	145	51.91	63.81	-11.91
Occidental Petroleum	146	51.64	New	New
Chevron	147	51.21	52.37	-1.16
Goldman Sachs	148	49.81	67.12	-17.31
Citigroup	149	46.00	53.40	-7.40
CITGO	150	45.45	45.33	0.12
Exxon Mobil	151	39.70	38.48	1.22
AIG	152	34.27	61.79	-27.52
Halliburton	153	27.47	23.99	3.48

Pulse scores are standardized on both the country and global level.

All Global Pulse scores that differ by more than +/-0.5 are significantly different at the 95% confidence level.

For more information on survey methodology go to: <http://www.reputationinstitute.com/advisory-services/global-pulse>.