

## 20 most profitable companies

From oil to iPads, here are the 20 companies that pulled in the most massive sums.

### Exxon Mobil



**Fortune 500 rank: 1**

**2011 profit: \$41.6 billion**

It looks as if Exxon Mobil has it all. It's not only No. 1 on this year's Fortune 500 list, it has also topped our list of most profitable companies. With a total profit of \$41 billion for 2011, Exxon surpassed all of its Big Oil competitors, including BP, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, and Shell.

The company repurchased 278 million shares of its common stock at a gross of \$22.1 billion. It also struck a deal with oil giant Rosneft to explore for oil in Russian-controlled portions of the Arctic Ocean and Black Sea.

### Chevron



**Fortune 500 rank: 3**

**2011 profit: \$26.9 billion**

Chevron held on to its third place spot on the Fortune 500 this year but moved up to No. 2 on our most profitable list. Sales and other operating revenues in the fourth quarter of 2011 were at \$58 billion, up from \$52 billion in the previous year's quarter, thanks to higher prices for crude oil and refined products.

The oil company is still dealing with accusations from Brazilian authorities that it had not taken full responsibility for an oil spill off the coast of Rio de Janeiro last November.

## Apple



**Fortune 500 rank:** 17  
**2011 profit:** \$25.9 billion

When it comes to profits, Apple continues to blow all other tech companies out of the water.

The company raked in just under \$26 billion in profits in 2011, an 85% jump from the previous year.

iPad and related product sales reached \$20.4 billion in 2011, a staggering 311% increase from the previous year's results.

There were, however, a few sales setbacks to what was otherwise a great year for the company. iPod net sales decreased by \$821 million, or 10%, during 2011 compared to the previous year.

## Microsoft



**Fortune 500 rank:** 37  
**2011 profit:** \$23.2 billion

It's all about change for the Redmond, Wash.-based software giant. While Microsoft's operating system business is still strong, it made up a smaller portion of the company's \$23 billion in profits in 2011 (a 23% jump from 2010). The company's server and online advertising units are on the growth path, however, while the company is gearing up for the launch of its Windows 8 operating system.

### **Ford Motor**



**Fortune 500 rank:** 9  
**2011 profit:** \$20.2 billion

With a more than 200% increase in net income compared to the previous year, 2011 was the strongest year in a decade for Ford. Despite its success, the company was certainly not immune to the European fiscal crisis; its operations in Europe lost \$190 million in the fourth quarter alone. The company also absorbed losses due to floods in Thailand in 2011, but Ford seems to be moving ahead in sixth gear.

### **J.P. Morgan Chase**



**Fortune 500 rank:** 16  
**2011 profit:** \$19.0 billion

Despite financial setbacks stemming from the earthquake in Japan, several floods in Thailand, a sharp rise in oil prices, and Europe's financial crisis, J.P. Morgan Chase still managed to make it onto this year's list of most profitable Fortune 500 companies. The bank reported 2011 record net income of \$19 billion, a 9% jump from the previous year and higher than analyst predictions.

### **American International Group**



**Fortune 500 rank:** 33  
**2011 profit:** \$17.8 billion

AIG has made a comeback to Fortune's most profitable list, with a 129% increase in profits in 2011 compared to the previous year. Granted, the insurance company is still traveling on a long road to recovery that started with a \$182 billion government bailout.

During 2011, the insurance giant repaid approximately \$21 billion owed to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and raised more than \$8.7 billion through the sale of AIG common stock. Included in the sale were 200 million shares sold by the Treasury Department.

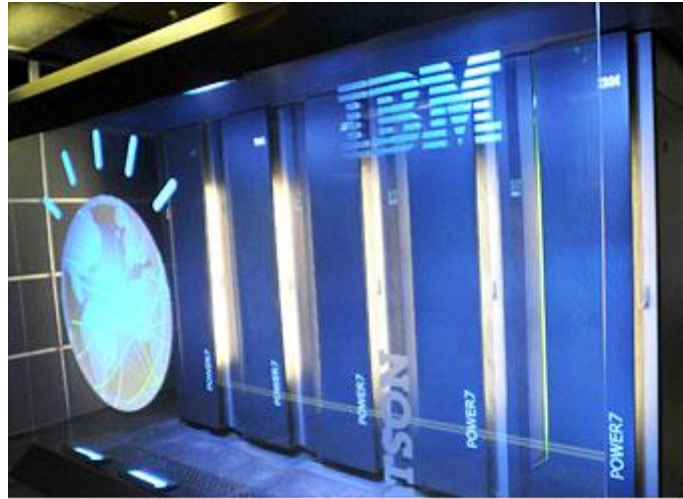
### **Wells Fargo**



**Fortune 500 rank:** 26  
**2011 profit:** \$15.9 billion

Wells Fargo is one of only three banks on this year's most profitable list, but with a record net income for the third consecutive year, up 28% from the previous year, the company earned its spot. According to the bank, Wells serve one of every three U.S. households, and they are the nation's biggest small business lender in dollars. In 2011, Wells Fargo also gave \$213.5 million to 25,000 nonprofits across the U.S.

### International Business Machines



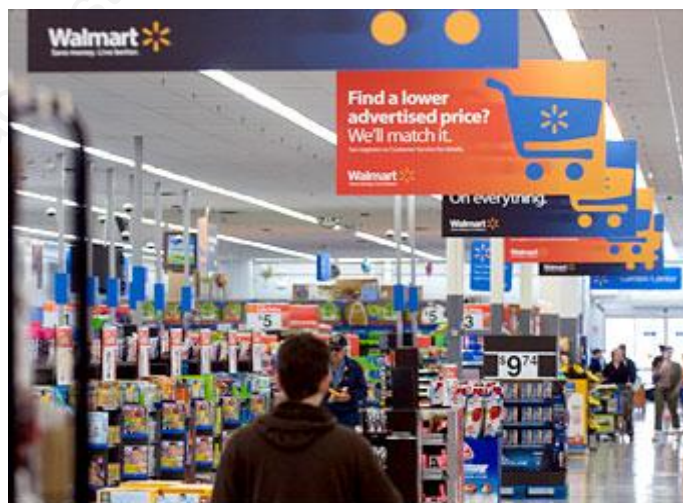
COURTESY: IBM

**Fortune 500 rank:** 19  
**2011 profit:** \$15.9 billion

Not only did IBM report revenue of \$107 billion, up 7% from 2010; they also reported last October they would be bringing on the company's first female CEO, Virginia M. Rometty.

Collectively, revenues from the tech giant's operations in Brazil, Russia, India, and China increased by 10% in 2011. Sales from IBM's smart commerce operations grew by 25%. And its cloud computing unit's revenues more than tripled from the previous year.

### Wal-Mart Stores



COURTESY: WAL-MART

**Fortune 500 rank:** 2  
**2011 profit:** \$15.7 billion

The retail giant has certainly had better years. Wal-Mart lost its top spot on this year's Fortune 500, fell four spots on our most profitable ranking, and is now dealing with bribery allegations related to its operations in Mexico. Just the same, business abroad has been essential to its growth. Net sales for the Wal-Mart International increased by 12% in 2011, with Brazil, China, and Mexico contributing some of the largest increases.

## General Electric



COURTESY: GENERAL ELECTRIC

**Fortune 500 rank:** 6  
**2011 profit:** \$14.2 billion

GE increased its investment in research and development by 16% in 2011 compared to the previous year, and international sales of American-made products totaled \$18 billion, a \$1 billion increase from 2010.

Since 2009, GE has announced that it will invest \$1 billion in its appliance business, modernizing their factories in the U.S and moving parts of its manufacturing operations back to the U.S. from China and Mexico.

## Intel



PHOTO: JIM CASTEL/CNN

**Fortune 500 rank:** 51  
**2011 profit:** \$12.9 billion

Intel had a banner year in 2011. The company's revenue reached \$54 billion, up by 24% compared to 2010. For the first time in 2011, total PC purchases were higher in China than in any other country, followed by the U.S., Brazil, and Russia. Revenue for the PC market segment of Intel's business increased by 17% in 2011, compared to 2010.

## ConocoPhillips



COURTESY: CONOCOPHILLIPS

**Fortune 500 rank:** 4  
**2011 profit:** \$12.4 billion

ConocoPhillips repurchased \$11.1 billion of their shares, reduced their debt by \$1 billion, and generated \$4.8 billion from divestments. All of this made 2011 a great year for the company's shareholders. Production fell in 2011 and related oil exports were suspended on account of the conflict in Libya, but the oil giant still managed to pull off a highly profitable year.

## Procter & Gamble



COURTESY: PROCTER & GAMBLE

**Fortune 500 rank:** 27  
**2011 profit:** \$11.8 billion

Procter & Gamble, which is behind everything from Venus razors to Tide detergent, slipped from fourth most profitable in 2009 to No. 14 this year. The company's 2011 profits decreased by over 7% compared to the previous year as the cost of materials and fuel rises while American consumption remains cautious.

The consumer goods giant's operating cash flow was down to \$13.2 billion in 2011, from \$16.1 the previous year, but their overall net sales were up to \$82.6 billion from \$78.9 billion in 2010.

## **Citigroup**



PHOTO: JOHN R. COUGHLIN/ONNEMONEY

**Fortune 500 rank:** 20  
**2011 profit:** \$11.1 billion

Citigroup's profits were up by 4%, to \$11 billion, from the year before. It's safe to say they had a good year, but when you look back at 2006, when Citi pulled in roughly \$21 billion, you realize they have some ground to cover.

## **Berkshire Hathaway**



**Fortune 500 rank:** 7  
**2011 profit:** \$10.3 billion

Even though Berkshire Hathaway slipped from No. 10 in last year's most profitable list to No. 16 this year, they still had plenty to celebrate in 2011. All of the company's major businesses performed well, with each of their five largest non-insurance companies -- Iscar, Lubrizol, Marmon Group, and MidAmerican Energy -- delivering record operating earnings.



It wasn't all smooth sailing for Berkshire Hathway, though. The company spent about \$2 billion in bonds of Energy Future Holdings, which ended up as a big loss.

It also hasn't helped that several of Berkshire's businesses are significantly influenced by fluctuations in the housing market, which has certainly seen better days. Clayton Homes, the largest producer of homes in the country, accounted for about 7% of all homes constructed in the U.S. last year.

## **Pfizer**



PHOTO: TIMOTHY A. CLARY/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

**Fortune 500 rank:** 40  
**2011 profit:** \$10.0 billion

After the expiration of its patent for rockstar cholesterol drug Lipitor, many wonder whether Pfizer can hold onto its status as the world's largest drug maker. The company sustained \$5 billion in losses related to the patent expiration in 2011, but they still managed to land at No. 17 on our list of most profitable companies.

Among all companies on this year's most profitable list, Pfizer experienced the smallest change in revenue from 2010, at .02%. And the company delivered a 28.7% total return to shareholders, one of the largest returns in this year's cohort.

## **Google**



PHOTO: JP. MANGALINDAN

**Fortune 500 rank:** 73  
**2011 profit:** \$9.7 billion

Google's revenue -- at \$37.9 billion -- increased by 29.3% in 2011 compared to the previous year. And profits, at \$9.7 billion, were up by 14.5% in 2011 compared to the previous year. A staggering 96% of the company's revenue came from its advertising platform, Adwords. The finance and insurance industry spent a whopping \$4 billion on Google ads in 2011, followed by retailers and merchandisers at \$2.8 billion.

All of this should spell great news for Google. But as the prices that Google can charge advertisers continues to decline, the challenge of finding new sources of revenue lingers.

### **Johnson & Johnson**



PHOTO: EMMANUEL TAMBAKAKIS/CNN

**Fortune 500 rank:** 42  
**2011 profit:** \$9.7 billion

Over the past year, Johnson & Johnson fell from No. 9 to No. 13 on our list of most profitable companies. Profits at the drug maker were down by almost 28% in 2011 compared to the previous year, as the company dealt with recalls, quality control issues at its factories, and subsequent government investigations. In April 2012, William Weldon stepped down as CEO, officially handing over the top job -- and all the turnaround challenges -- to Alex Gorsky.

### **General Motors**



PHOTO: JOHN F. MARTIN FOR GENERAL MOTORS

**Fortune 500 rank: 5**  
**2011 profit: \$9.2 billion**

GM has a lot on its plate, to say the least. But despite rising gas prices, recalls, and the not so distant memory of bankruptcy and accepting a nearly \$50 billion bailout from the federal government, General Motors has emerged triumphant. The company's profits were up by nearly 49% in 2011 compared to the previous year, and the automaker reclaimed its title as global sales leader from Toyota.

**Fonte: Fortune, 7 May. 2012. Disponível em:**  
**<[http://money.cnn.com/galleries/2012/fortune/1205/gallery.500-most-profitable.fortune/?iid=SF\\_F\\_Lead](http://money.cnn.com/galleries/2012/fortune/1205/gallery.500-most-profitable.fortune/?iid=SF_F_Lead)>. Acesso em: 9 May. 2012.**

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