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## My brand's bigger than yours: Harley the only Wisconsin brand to make 2009 'best global brands' list

Interbrand, in conjunction with Business Week, recently released its [2009 annual ranking](#) of the world's most valuable brands. The only Wisconsin-based brand to make the list of 100 is [Harley-Davidson](#) (Milwaukee).



Harley-Davidson fell from last year's number 50 spot to number 73 this year, reflecting a 43% drop in brand value. Harley's drop in position and value was one of the largest declines among those ranked. The primary reason cited for this decline is a tight credit market, making it more difficult for consumers to purchase a Harley (sales in the US were off 13%). Nonetheless, Harley is striving to maintain its brand relevance by targeting younger riders with appealing products at lower price points and introducing new products. Last year Harley-Davidson opened its Museum and celebrated the

brand's 105th anniversary. Harley-Davidson has been on the Interbrand list since it began its list, and has been ranked as high as 41 in 2004.

As for the rest of the list, there are few significant changes among last years' top brands (Coca-Cola, IBM, Microsoft, GE, and Nokia). The most significant changes this year were among financial services firms, principally banks. Overall, American-based brands accounted for just over half (51%) of the top 100 brands ranked.

While [Interbrand](#) has been compiling the list for the past nine years, its methodology remains open to debate. Interbrand ranks brands on several factors, including financial analysis and a calculation of "branded earnings", which considers how much the brand influences consumer demand at the point of purchase.

To be considered for inclusion, a single brand must derive at least one-third of its earnings from outside its home country, be recognizable beyond its base of customers, and have publicly available marketing and financial data. These criteria rule out privately-held companies, and holding companies with a portfolio of brands, as multi-brand companies are not considered.

Since there is no commonly-accepted method to valuing brands, there are other companies with their own approaches to measuring brand value, including [Y&R](#), [Brand Finance](#), and [CoreBrand](#).

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