

THE WORLD'S MOST ADMIRED CEOS OF 2005

- Microsoft's Bill Gates Named Most Admired Global Leader in Burson-Marsteller's New Reputation Survey -

NEW YORK, December 14, 2005 – Despite the continuing controversy surrounding today's corporate executives, leadership still shapes a company's destiny. A new global study conducted by Burson-Marsteller with the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) names Bill Gates, Microsoft's chairman and chief software architect, the world's most admired business leader. The 2005 CEO Capital™ study asked more than 600 global business influentials in 65 countries to write in which CEO or chairman they admire most in the business world today. The CEO/chairman rankings appear below.

2005 World's Most Admired Chief Executives

Rank	CEO/Chairman	Company	Country
1	Bill Gates	Microsoft	U.S.
2	Steve Jobs	Apple	U.S.
3	Warren Buffett	Berkshire Hathaway	U.S.
4	Michael Dell	Dell	U.S.
5	Richard Branson	Virgin Group	U.K.
6	John Browne	BP	U.K.
7	Carlos Ghosn	Nissan Motor & Renault	Japan/France
8	N. R. Narayana Murthy	Infosys Technologies	India
9	Jeffrey Immelt	General Electric	U.S.
10	Rupert Murdoch	News Corporation	Australia
11	John Bond	HSBC Holdings	U.K.
12	John Chambers	Cisco Systems	U.S.
13	Jorma Ollila	Nokia	Finland
14	Terry Leahy	Tesco	U.K.
15	Lakshmi Mittal	Mittal Steel	Netherlands

Source: Understanding CEO Capital™, 2005, Burson-Marsteller.

“The selection of Bill Gates as the 2005 world’s most admired leader not only recognizes his ongoing stewardship at the company he founded but it also acknowledges the powerful effect that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has had on Bill Gates’ reputation,” remarked Dr. Leslie Gaines-Ross, Burson-Marsteller’s chief knowledge & research officer worldwide and the study’s architect. “Leaders and their companies can no longer safely ignore the value placed on corporate responsibility and commitment by 21st century citizens.”

Several interesting characteristics about the world’s top 15 most admired leaders surfaced:

1. Despite the predominance of American companies among the top four most admired leaders, more than half (nine of 15 or 60 percent) represent other regions -- UK (4), Finland (1), Netherlands (1), Japan/France (1), India (1) and Australia (1).
2. Eight of the top 15 leaders (53 percent) are company founders.
3. All of the global most admired are insider CEOs (CEOs who have been with the same company for three years or more).
4. No female CEOs or chairmen were chosen.

“Business decision-makers clearly voted for long-term performance and proven track records over fleeting success,” said Patrick Ford, Burson-Marsteller’s Global Corporate/Financial Practice chair. “The tenures of these top-ranking CEOs are not short-lived. They had an average tenure of 21 years to repeatedly prove themselves.”

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About the 2005 CEO Capital Study

Burson-Marsteller has been conducting landmark research on CEO and corporate reputation since 1997. The new 2005 CEO Capital study was conducted in 65 countries online with the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) between May and July 2005. It was completed by 685 business influentials -- CEOs, senior executives, financial analysts, business media and government officials. Roughly one-third of respondents came from North America (26 percent), Europe (32 percent) and Asia-Pacific (32 percent), and one-tenth from Latin America (10 percent). Participants were drawn from a cross-section of 19 industries. Please visit www.ceogo.com for more information.

About Burson-Marsteller

Burson-Marsteller (www.burson-marsteller.com), established in 1953, is a leading global public relations and public affairs firm. It provides clients with strategic thinking and program execution across a full range of public relations, public affairs, advertising, and web-related services. The firm’s seamless worldwide network consists of 50 wholly owned offices and 43 affiliate offices, together operating in 57 countries across six continents. Burson-Marsteller is a part of Young & Rubicam Brands, a subsidiary of WPP Group plc (NASDAQ: WPPGY), one of the world’s leading communications services networks.

About the Economist Intelligence Unit

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) (www.eiu.com) is the world leader in global business intelligence. It is the business-to-business arm of The Economist Group, which publishes *The Economist* newspaper. The EIU provides geopolitical, economic and business analysis on more than 200 countries, as well as strategic intelligence on key industries and management practices. With over 300 full-time professionals in 40 offices around the world, supported by a global network of more than 700 contributing analysts, the EIU is widely known for its unparalleled coverage of major and emerging markets.

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