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*for immediate release*

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## **Davis Names Brand Capital Leaders in Five Top Industries** Leaders in Automotive, Finance, Retail, Technology and Telecom Among the Strongest in Integrated Management of Intangibles

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**ATLANTA (March 9, 2010)** -- Davis Brand Capital, which published the *2009 Davis Brand Capital 25* ranking in December, today announced expanded rankings in five industries: automotive, finance, retail, technology, and telecom.

In determining the *Davis Brand Capital 25*, the consultancy analyzed more than 1,000 brands and companies across dozens of industries. Each was assessed according to the key intangibles defining brand capital: brand value; competitive performance; innovation strength; company culture; and social impact. The industry rankings announced today include leaders beyond the top 25 that also have demonstrated disciplined and balanced management of brand capital.

### **Automotive: Reputations on the Line**

Despite having one of the worst years in history, automakers were prominent on the overall 2009 ranking. Foreign manufacturers comprise the majority of the expanded industry ranking, with the exception of resurgent Ford (NYSE: F); Toyota (NYSE: TM) (8); Honda (NYSE: HMC) (23); Ford (34); Volkswagen (XETRA: VOW) (35); and Mercedes-Benz (NYSE: DAI) (56).

"Although Toyota enjoyed a significant lead over second-place Honda in 2009, its number-one ranking within the auto industry will certainly be difficult for the brand to maintain in 2010," said Patrick T. Davis, chief executive officer at Davis Brand Capital. "The brand has recalled an unprecedented 8.5 million vehicles, and the impact on brand value and the future of Toyota's innovation efforts remains to be seen."

"Meanwhile, Ford, the only U.S. manufacturer on the list, recently posted its first profit since 2005 and is gaining U.S. market share," said Davis. "We believe the Ford brand is poised to perform even better on the 2010 ranking."

### **Financial Services: A Controversial Brand Receives a Broader View**

Several financial services companies made strong showings on the overall *Davis Brand Capital 25*, despite the economic downturn of 2009. The expanded list of top-five industry leaders ranked highly for their management of intangible assets are: HSBC (NYSE: HBC) (19); JPMorgan Chase (NYSE: JPM) (20); Goldman Sachs (NYSE: GS) (28); Wells Fargo (NYSE: WFC) (32); and Bank of America (NYSE: BAC) (40).

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## Davis Brand Capital 25 - Industry Rankings / Add One

Of those, the relatively high ranking of Goldman Sachs may be the most surprising. "Goldman Sachs is embroiled in a public relations controversy regarding executive compensation and now-questionable financial products innovations. But, when looked at holistically, its management of brand capital during 2009 was sound," said Davis. "Goldman's competitive performance and company culture received particularly high marks, but it is possible that eroding trust equity will impact its ranking this year."

### **Retail: A Luxury Standout**

The overall top-ranking retail companies include such leaders as Walmart (NYSE: WMT) (10), Amazon.com (NasdaqGS: AMZN) (17), and Target (NYSE: TGT) (29), joined by specialty online retailer Zappos.com (50) and luxury icon Louis Vuitton (OTC: LVMUY:US) (51) on the expanded industry list. The 156-year-old, legendary French brand outperformed many mainstream retailers during what might be considered a "luxury collapse."

"Unlike most luxury brands, Louis Vuitton has driven corporate performance with an expanded product range while not eroding brand value. Zappos has solved the problem of online service while aggressively performing in the electronic marketplace. The combination with parent Amazon makes the two companies the leading retail group now," said Davis. "These careful approaches to balancing multiple intangibles will drive retail success going forward."

### **Technology: Leadership in Intangibles**

The technology industry dominated the top spots on the 2009 ranking. The expanded industry list moves Intel into the top five: IBM (NYSE: IBM) (1); Hewlett-Packard (NYSE: HPQ) (3); Microsoft (NasdaqGS: MSFT) (4); Cisco Systems (NasdaqGS: CSCO) (5); and Intel (NasdaqGS: INTC) (6). The superior marks for technology companies grow from an industry based on the sophisticated creation and marketing of intellectual assets, plus collaborative company cultures and more extensive social responsibility commitments. Apple (NasdaqGS: AAPL) (12) has extraordinary brand value but lags behind competitors in other key intangibles, according to source data for the rankings.

"The technology industry has set the bar for the integrated management of brand capital," said Davis. "Brand capital drives the intellectual economy, and it is no accident that our intellectual leaders are doing the best at managing it."

### **Telecom: The Reshaping of an Industry**

Arch-rivals AT&T (NYSE: T) (13) and Verizon (NYSE: VZ) (14), currently embroiled in multi-billion-dollar comparative advertising campaigns, hold the top two spots within the telecommunications industry. Joining the U.S.-based companies in the telecom top five are global heavyweights Nokia (NYSE: NOK) (15), Vodafone (NasdaqGS: VOD) (26), and Samsung (KRX: 005930) (34). But how well these leaders continue to manage their brand capital in 2010 may depend on their nimbleness in the year of the iPad.

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## Davis Brand Capital 25 - Industry Rankings / Add Two

"Telecom and technology companies will continue to converge in an age of mobile dominance," said Davis. "The iPad sets a new standard: hardware and network pairings alone will no longer be enough. To win going forward, the telecom leaders that received high marks on the overall ranking must get as serious regarding intangibles as their technology industry counterparts."

The *Davis Brand Capital 25* is based on a rigorous study of ten distinct data sets. The ranking is an analysis and compilation of available and accepted data sets published in industry-leading and specialized annual lists, plus proprietary processes and data. The ranking will be updated yearly, with the *2010 Davis Brand Capital 25* to be released in December 2010.

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Since 1996, Davis Brand Capital (formerly Patrick Davis Partners) has specialized in the creation, management and valuation of brand capital for global clients. Through brand analytics, brand strategy, and brand management & measurement, the firm establishes desirability, drives growth and margins, opens new markets, and increases overall brand value. Davis Brand Capital is the publisher of *Unbound Edition*, the marketing industry's leading news aggregator. The firm is headquartered in Atlanta, with operations in New York, St. Louis and Washington, DC (affiliate). For more information, visit [www.davisbrandcapital.com](http://www.davisbrandcapital.com).