



The Pulse of Corporate Innovation: BCG's 2022 Most Innovative Companies

To BCG's network around the world,

Innovation is fundamental to a company's differentiation, growth, and value creation. In other words, it is central to the role of senior leadership.

Almost [every year since 2003](#), BCG has monitored corporate innovation, identifying the top 50 companies based on survey responses from 1,500 C-suite and senior executives across 41 markets and 19 industries, as well as total shareholder return data. We assess the overall state of innovation and examine how the top performers secured their spot.

The innovation that has taken place over the past 20 years is remarkable. We've seen the emergence of new kinds of products, such as the first smartphones, electric vehicles, and a number of lifesaving and life-enhancing advances in health care. New business and operating models have emerged, leveraging e-commerce, highly sophisticated analytics, and, increasingly, AI.

Looking back at the lists over time, here are some important patterns:

The Staying Power of Technology. Apple has been at the top of the list almost every year beginning in 2005 (with a slight drop to number three in 2019). Technology has been the most prominent industry on this list since we started putting it together. [This year](#), it represents 42% of the top 50 list, and 9 of the top 10 companies, reflecting both the pervasiveness of technology in our lives as well as the advantages of pioneering and deploying digital and business model innovation to create sustained differentiation.

Disruption Is Evergreen—and Influential. Breaking through isn't easy, but we've seen a trend for years of disruptive companies working their way onto the list and raising the bar. Six players on the 2022 list, including two in the top ten (Tesla and Moderna), are younger than the list itself. And these disruptors can wield a great deal of influence. Tesla, for example, has not only established itself as a perennial presence since joining the list in 2013 but has disrupted the broader automotive industry. Several auto companies have made substantial commitments to innovation and are back on the list after an absence.

The Challenge of Repeated Success. Only six companies have made the list every year since it began: Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, Toyota, IBM, and Samsung. While each of these players has adopted different innovation models, the commonalities provide a guide that all companies can emulate. They have each set a clear innovation strategy, built and maintained a well-defined innovation system, invested in digital tools and platforms, and fostered an innovation-friendly culture.

The Innovation of Retail. Seven retailers appear on our 2022 list. Five of these are digital natives: Amazon, Alibaba, Zalando, Jingdong, and eBay. They are joined by Walmart and Target, which have innovated to compete with digital disruptors and to respond effectively to changing consumer behaviors and supply chain challenges driven by the pandemic.

The Green Growth Imperative. This year's report revealed that product, process, and business model innovations related to climate and sustainability have become a top corporate priority. Many of the companies on the 2022 list were among the first to embrace ESG principles and set decarbonization goals. And 80% of them are among the top innovators in climate and sustainability, according to their global peers.

How to Advance Innovation Excellence

The BCG team behind the Most Innovative Companies report has found through its research that there are tactical steps that companies—no matter their starting point—can take to improve their innovation ROI and outperform their peers:

- **Set a clear innovation ambition:** Why do we innovate, and what's our goal?
- **Define the innovation domain:** Where do we play, and what's our "unfair" advantage?

- **Integrate innovation into performance management:** What outcomes do we reward and celebrate?
- **Monitor and redeploy resource allocation:** Which innovation projects will we accelerate? Which projects or programs should we stop to make that happen?
- **Work in agile ways and embrace digital tools:** Do we have agile teams working with end-to-end responsibility?
- **Mind your culture:** Have we built an innovative culture, one that can attract the best talent?

Please see below to read this year's report, along with other related content.

Until next time,



Christoph Schweizer
Chief Executive Officer

Further Reading



[Most Innovative Companies 2022: Are You Ready for Green Growth?](#)

Companies have plenty of “will” but much less “way” when it comes to climate and sustainability innovation readiness.

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Powering the Innovation Flywheel in the Digital Era

It's time for market leaders to take a page from the digital-native playbook and create a new source of competitive advantage—through innovation at speed and at scale.

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