

## GBR: Big brands dominate... Scotland extends lead



Intangible Business, the brand valuation consultancy, has released its annual league table of the world's most powerful wine and spirits brands in 2009.

The Power 100, now in its fourth year, was compiled from analysis of over 10,000 brands. It combines each brand's financial contribution with consumer brand strength analysis from a panel of the world's experts.

Smirnoff retains its title as the most powerful spirits brand in the world in 2009, following remarkable annual growth. Johnnie Walker is closing at number two and Bacardi enters in third place. This year's top 10 are: Smirnoff, Johnnie Walker, Bacardi, Martini, Hennessy, Absolut, Jack Daniels, Chivas Regal, Baileys and Ballantines.

The big brand owners, Diageo, Pernod Ricard and Bacardi Martini, increased their dominance of the industry through further consolidation and by attracting more consumers to their category leading brands.

The majority of the highest climbers in 2009 came from the biggest brands with Smirnoff increasing its value most, 7%, followed by Martini and Johnnie Walker, both by 6%. The biggest faller was Pastis 51 falling 15 places, followed by Seagram V.O. also falling 15 places and Metaxa, down 12.

Scotland extended its lead as the most powerful country of origin in 2009, increasing 5% following an impressive year for Scotch whisky. The second most powerful country of origin, USA, is in danger of being overtaken by resurgent French brands. USA's score fell by 1% compared to France's which grew at 10%.

Stuart Whitwell, joint MD of Intangible Business, said the past year had seen huge changes in the world economy, but the drinks industry had proved resilient.

"Big brands have benefited the most. The top 10 increased in value by 8%; every brand in it increased in value; its rank order remains unchanged; and it accounts for 44% of value in the top 100," he said.

"Smirnoff epitomises the trend for big brands. Just when you think Smirnoff couldn't grow any further, it puts in a stellar performance. Its premium positioning, skilled management, category leadership, global distribution, versatility and carefully crafted brand extensions contribute to Smirnoff's impressive growth."

"This consumer drive to safety is set to continue as the industry continues to consolidate. The impact of the recession may also become more apparent creating opportunities for second tier and cash-rich companies to bolster their portfolios. As ever, the motivation for purchase will be the brands, driving both volume and value."