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Tough Economy Redefines Competitive Landscape with Over 50% Turnover of the Top 20 Most Competitive Companies for Retail and Consumer Goods in 2009

Latest data is according to wRatings Annual Study Sponsored by Fortna Inc.

HERNDON, VA – (BusinessWire) – April 7, 2009 – The wRatings Corporation, an independent stock research firm, announced today the results of the annual Most Competitive Retail & Consumer Goods Study, which was sponsored by Fortna Inc., a leader in designing, implementing and supporting complete supply chain solutions. In the report, Colgate-Palmolive (NYSE: CL) rises to the #1 consumer goods company in 2009 with a W Score™ of 92.6. Coach (NYSE: COH), a premium-based retailer adapting to the new cost-conscious consumer, is the #1 retailer with a W Score of 92.7. A W Score of 100 means the business built the highest consumer and economic advantages when compared to the 1200+ companies in the wRatings national coverage.

Since mid-2008 when the turmoil hit hardest, the extreme turnover (75% for Retailers, 55% for Consumer Goods) in the Top 20 rankings shows how rapidly the landscape is changing. The competitive companies remaining in Q1-2009 are on track to emerge from the recession with greater customer and economic strength than their rivals. Various reasons exist for their durability, but most critical are access to real-time data along with the ability to transform your business faster than ever before.

The 2009 report examines many of the shifting consumer preferences that companies can tap into to generate revenue. For example, as the economy shifted dramatically in late 2008, consumers moved rapidly from rewards-based buyers (i.e. benefits) to risk-based buyers in 2009. While the turn does favor low- or value-priced companies, consumers remain willing to make premium purchases if companies help mitigate their fears through risk-reduction programs like guarantees and insurance.

"In mid-2008, the emotional state of consumers heightened to their highest levels since the last recession," said Gary A. Williams, CEO & founder of wRatings. "Yet, pricing power remains at a relatively consistent level around 4.1% nationwide. This means that consumer demand still exists – and the smartest companies are tapping into these new customer expectations and needs."

The Most Competitive report series from wRatings identifies the best performing companies through a patented method that blends financial and consumer data. To arrive at the rankings, wRatings ask consumers how well companies meet their expectations every quarter. The consumer ratings are categorized by 9 competitive moats, or barriers to entry companies create to protect against rivals taking their customers and, ultimately, their profits. Each W Score blends a company's historical economic profit with its competitive moat scores.

"We are proud to see Fortna clients acknowledged as supply chain leaders in this study," said John White, EVP, Fortna. "Our clients' success is a testament to the value of Fortna's integrated approach where we balance processes, systems, people and assets with a focus on positively impacting the bottom line and creating a foundation for future growth."



Top 20 Most Competitive Retailers

| 2009-Q1 Rank | Mid-2008 Rank | Retailer | Ticker | W Score™ |
|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|--------|----------|
| 1 | 14 | Coach | COH | 92.7 |
| 2 | 82 | Jos. A. Bank | JOSB | 91.6 |
| 3 | 34 | Aeropostale | ARO | 90.7 |
| 4 | 41 | Amazon.com (General Site) | AMZN | 88.1 |
| 5 | 30 | Timberland | TBL | 87.4 |
| 6 | 17 | Guess Stores | GES | 87.0 |
| 7 | 47 | Amazon (Books Only) | AMZN | 86.9 |
| 8 | 38 | T.J. Maxx | TJX | 85.3 |
| 9 | 37 | Abercrombie & Fitch | ANF | 84.6 |
| 10 | 94 | DSW Shoes | DSW | 81.8 |
| 11 | 99 | The Buckle | BKE | 80.9 |
| 12 | 88 | Victoria's Secret | LTD | 80.6 |
| 13 | 105 | Limited Too | TWB | 80.2 |
| 14 | 4 | American Eagle | AEO | 80.1 |
| 15 | 111 | Dress Barn | DBRN | 79.7 |
| 16 | 6 | Hibbett | HIBB | 79.2 |
| 17 | 21 | Marshalls | TJX | 78.3 |
| 18 | 13 | Carter's | CRI | 77.5 |
| 19 | 72 | Urban Outfitters | URBN | 77/0 |
| 20 | 32 | The UPS Store | UPS | 76.7 |

Top 20 Most Competitive Consumer Goods Companies

| 2009-Q1 Rank | Mid-2008 Rank | Consumer Goods | Ticker | W Score™ |
|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|--------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | Colgate Toothpaste | CL | 92.6 |
| 2 | 29 | Mountain Dew / Diet MD | PEP | 92.0 |
| 3 | 19 | Budweiser / Bud Light | ABI | 91.2 |
| 4 | 52 | Vaseline | UN | 91.2 |
| 5 | 12 | Kellogg Cereals | K | 91.1 |
| 6 | 8 | Sam Adams / SA Light | SAM | 90.5 |
| 7 | 40 | Weight Watchers | WTW | 90.4 |
| 8 | 51 | Kleenex Tissue | KMB | 89.8 |
| 9 | 4 | Clorox Products | CLX | 88.6 |
| 10 | 32 | Gildan Activewear | GIL | 87.7 |
| 11 | 13 | NIKE Products | NKE | 87.7 |
| 12 | 20 | Marvel-Branded Products | MVL | 87.6 |
| 13 | 7 | Coke / Diet Coke | KO | 86.2 |
| 14 | 5 | Crocs | CROX | 85.1 |
| 15 | 41 | Pepsi / Diet Pepsi | PEP | 83.9 |
| 16 | 64 | Hormel Foods | HRL | 82.5 |
| 17 | 1 | Heelys | HLYS | 82.5 |
| 17 | 46 | HNI Office Furniture | HNI | 82.5 |
| 19 | 75 | L'Oréal | LRLCY | 81.5 |
| 20 | 38 | Newport Cigarettes | LO | 81.4 |

The 2009 edition of **Most Competitive Retail & Consumer Goods** companies shows a breakdown of the top 20 in each industry, unveils critical trends in consumer expectations and pricing power, and spotlights several companies from the top 20. You can access a complimentary version of the report here:

Fortna: <http://www.fortna.com/>

SAP: <http://www.sap.com/usa/industries/retail/index.epx>, or
<http://www.sap.com/usa/industries/consumer/index.epx>

wRatings: <http://www.wRatings.com//projections.php?s=914> [limited time only]



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About wRatings Corporation

The wRatings Corporation is an independent stock research firm based in metro Washington DC. The company was founded by Harvard Business Review author, Gary A. Williams. He and his team continually study consumer and executive buying behavior to project the future earnings performance of companies. Since 1999, their original set of leading indicators uses a common framework to measure the competitive strength of companies. For more information, visit www.wRatings.com.

About Fortna - "Driving Supply Chain Results"

Fortna designs, implements and supports integrated solutions for our clients through supply chain consulting, material handling systems implementation and systems selection and implementation. Our "no-silos" business approach ensures alignment strategically, financially and operationally and brings our clients' supply chain strategy to life. Our integrated services and unmatched supply chain design tools have provided long term and trust-based relationships with clients in a wide range of industries including multi-channel retail, consumer products, electronics, parts distribution and third party logistics. www.fortna.com

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