

Where innovation lies

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Where are the world's most innovative companies and what do they do?

Companies that make semiconductors and other electronic components are collectively the most innovative industry, according to an analysis of patents carried out by Thomson Reuters, an information-services provider. Its ["Top 100 Global Innovators" report](#) rates companies by the proportion of their patent applications that are granted; the number of "quadrilateral" patents (those granted in China, Europe, Japan and America); how often patents are cited by other companies; and whether patents relate to new techniques or inventions or are refinements of existing ones. This approach is intended to overcome the limitations of using the number of patents filed or granted as a measure of innovation. Of the 100 companies in the list, which is not ranked and relates to patent activity from 2005-2010, 40 are from America, 27 from Japan and 11 from France. No Chinese companies qualified. The report says this "underscores the fact that although China is leading the world in patent volume, quantity does not equate to influence and quality."

