

# The 10 highest-paid CEOs at US public companies

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According to a new report from [The Conference Board](#), median pay for CEOs at US public companies was \$4.1 million last year. That's roughly 100 times what the average American worker makes, but a mere rounding error for the 10 men at the top of the CEO pay scale.

Of course, wage disparities can be found almost anywhere, including among the well-compensated. The top two earners for 2017, [Hock Tan](#) from the chipmaker Broadcom and Frank Bisignano from the credit-card processor [First Data](#), were awarded more than \$100 million each, which was \$30 million more than the next CEO on the list, Michael Rapino of Live Nation, and more than double the earnings of Time Warner's Jeffrey Bewkes, who came in at number 10 with just under \$49 million. (See the full list below).

The vast majority of the compensation for the top 10 came in the form of stock awards, which have all but replaced stock options as the pay incentive of choice at big public companies. According to The Conference Board, stock options, which tend to be more volatile and are increasingly seen as being less tied to performance, now account for just 13.2% of CEO compensation at S&P 500 companies, down from 17.8% in 2010. Over the same period, the proportion of compensation paid in the form of restricted shares or other stock awards rose from 32% to nearly 49%.

Here's the full breakdown in earnings for the 10 highest-paid CEOs of US public companies. A few other notable findings from The Conference Board's pay study:

| Name               | Company               | Total Comp | Salary | Bonus  | Stock options | Stock awards | Other  | Chng in Pension Value |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------|--------|--------|---------------|--------------|--------|-----------------------|
| Hock E. Tan        | Broadcom              | 103,211    | 1,100  | 3,713  |               | 98,323       | 76     |                       |
| Frank J. Bisignano | First Data            | 102,210    | 1,320  | 559    |               | 99,876       | 455    |                       |
| Michael Rapino     | Live Nation           | 70,616     | 2,417  | 7,767  | 1,721         | 58,632       | 80     |                       |
| Mario J. Gabelli   | Gamco Investors       | 69,414     |        |        |               |              | 69,414 |                       |
| Leslie Moonves     | CBS Corp.             | 69,333     | 3,500  | 20,000 |               | 43,696       | 1,179  | 958                   |
| W. Nicholas Howley | TransDigm Group       | 61,023     | 7      |        | 9,773         |              | 51,243 |                       |
| Douglas R. Lebda   | LendingTree           | 59,591     | 639    | 1,014  | 57,364        |              | 574    |                       |
| Douglas S. Ingram  | Sarepta Therapeutics  | 56,866     | 338    | 421    | 44,484        | 11,608       | 16     |                       |
| Ronald F. Clarke   | Fleetcor Technologies | 52,644     | 1,000  | 1,100  | 35,387        | 15,127       | 30     |                       |
| Jeffrey L. Bewkes  | Time Warner           | 48,999     | 2,000  | 14,700 |               | 32,000       | 262    | 36                    |

**Cash for cook.** Apple's Tim Cook doesn't figure into the top 10 list, or even the top 25. But he did take home more cash compensation than most CEOs did last year. His salary and bonus came to \$12.4 million, the 11th-highest cash haul among CEOs. The biggest cash earner (at \$23.5 million) was CBS Corp.'s Leslie Moonves, who [lost his job in September](#) after sexual misconduct allegations and an [alleged coverup](#) moved the board to get rid of him.

**Where are the women?** Safra Catz of Oracle, the highest-earning woman in the dataset, ranked 18th overall, with total compensation of \$40.7 million. Her co-CEO, Mark Hurd, edged her out to rank 17th with \$40.8 million. Though the two received the same salary and bonus, and the same amount in options and stock awards, Hurd received an extra \$102,000 in other compensation, tied mainly to the cost of a security system that the company paid to install at his residence. Catz was offered the same perk but declined it and [pays for her own home security](#).

**Up and down.** The largest CEO pay increases in 2017 came in the IT, utilities, healthcare, and energy sectors. CEOs in the consumer staples, materials, and telecommunications industries saw their 2017 total pay fall from 2016 levels. (Worry not for the telecom crowd; more than actual decreases in pay, this group was mainly affected by mergers that decreased the sample size in The Conference Board's study.)

**Size matters.** Pay grew fastest for CEOs at smaller companies. Firms with annual revenue under \$100 million bumped up their CEOs' pay by more than 20%, versus a 1.4% increase at companies with annual revenue of \$50 billion or more. Overall, median CEO pay rose 4.5% to \$11.9 million for companies in the S&P 500 index, and 9.9% to \$4.1 million for companies in the broader Russell 3000 index, which includes most of the [publicly traded stocks listed in the US](#).