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Diageo Brands Top Global Drinks Table - Study

LONDON--Smirnoff vodka, the liquor label owned by U.K. drinks giant Diageo PLC (DGE.LN), remains the world's leading drinks brand, even though its image in the past year has been scarred by promotional pricing activity in the key U.S. market, according to a study Tuesday.

Ranked No. 2 is a fellow brand in the Diageo stable, Johnnie Walker Scotch whisky, said Intangible Business, a brand-valuation consultancy that measures the performances of liquor and wine brands by assessing financial performance alongside consumer perception.

The brands are rated by industry experts according to their share of market, prospects for future growth, premium price position, awareness, relevance, heritage and brand perception.

Smirnoff has been at top spot for seven consecutive years, while Johnnie Walker has moved from third place into second.

Johnnie Walker has performed particularly well in Asia, which is a "hugely influential and important market" for the future growth of many top spirits brands, and in Brazil, the biggest growth market for Scotch, the study said.

"The ascent of Johnnie Walker in the emerging markets of Asia and Brazil really signifies the future direction of travel for the alcoholic drinks market. In China particularly, Scotch and cognac brands are proving particularly popular and Diageo, Pernod Ricard and Remy Cointreau have done well to capitalize on this shift in the market," said Stuart Whitwell, joint managing director of Intangible Business.

No. 3 and 4 in the table are Bacardi rum and Martini vermouth, both owned by Bacardi International Ltd., respectively. LVMH Moet Hennessy Louis Vuitton SA's (MC.FR) cognac brand Hennessy is No. 5.

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