

China's Plan to Rule World's Smart Devices

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## Everything You Know About Diet Is Wrong

Despite a proliferation of plans supposedly based on science, most theories about what to eat and why are flawed.

by DAVID H. FREEDMAN

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## America's Best Customer Service 2024

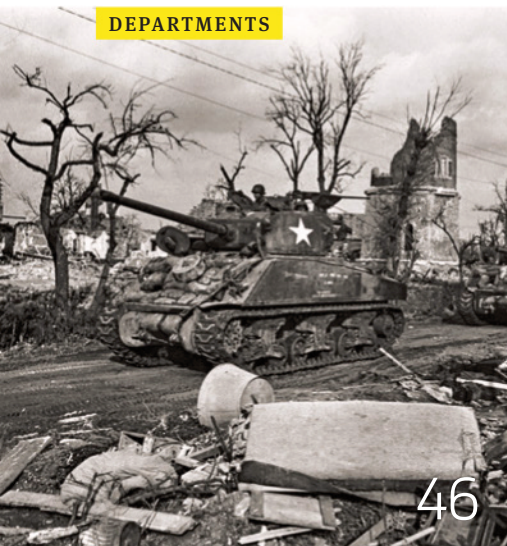
Newsweek and global data firm Statista find the 724 brands in 166 categories that consistently put the consumer first.

**GOOD HANDS** Whether online, brick-and-mortar or both, the retailers and service companies that take good care of their patrons tend to attract loyal followings and repeat business.

**COVER** Photograph by Kerdkanno/Getty



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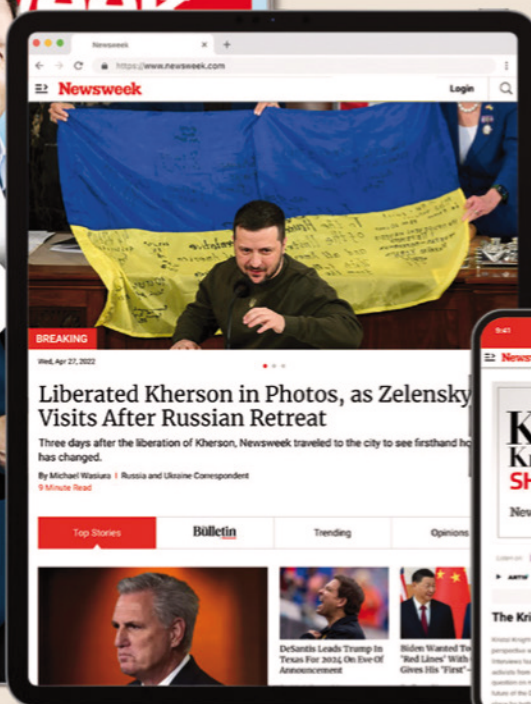
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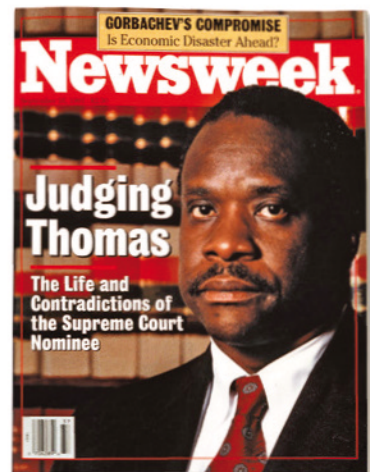
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# The Archives

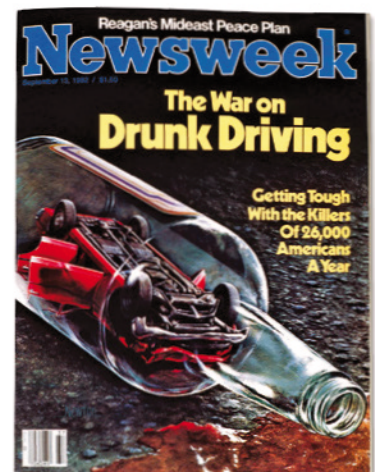
2011

"The real fixers; they're your neighbors, your friends, your colleagues. From keeping kids in school to rebuilding devastated cities, they're rolling up their sleeves and getting things done," *Newsweek* wrote to accompany profiles of "everyday Americans"—a teacher, lawyer and child psychiatrist, among others. "No community is beyond hope," said one small-town mayor. According to a June Gallup poll, public confidence in 16 societal areas remains low after last year's significant declines, including public schools in which only 26 percent had a great deal or quite a lot of confidence.



1991

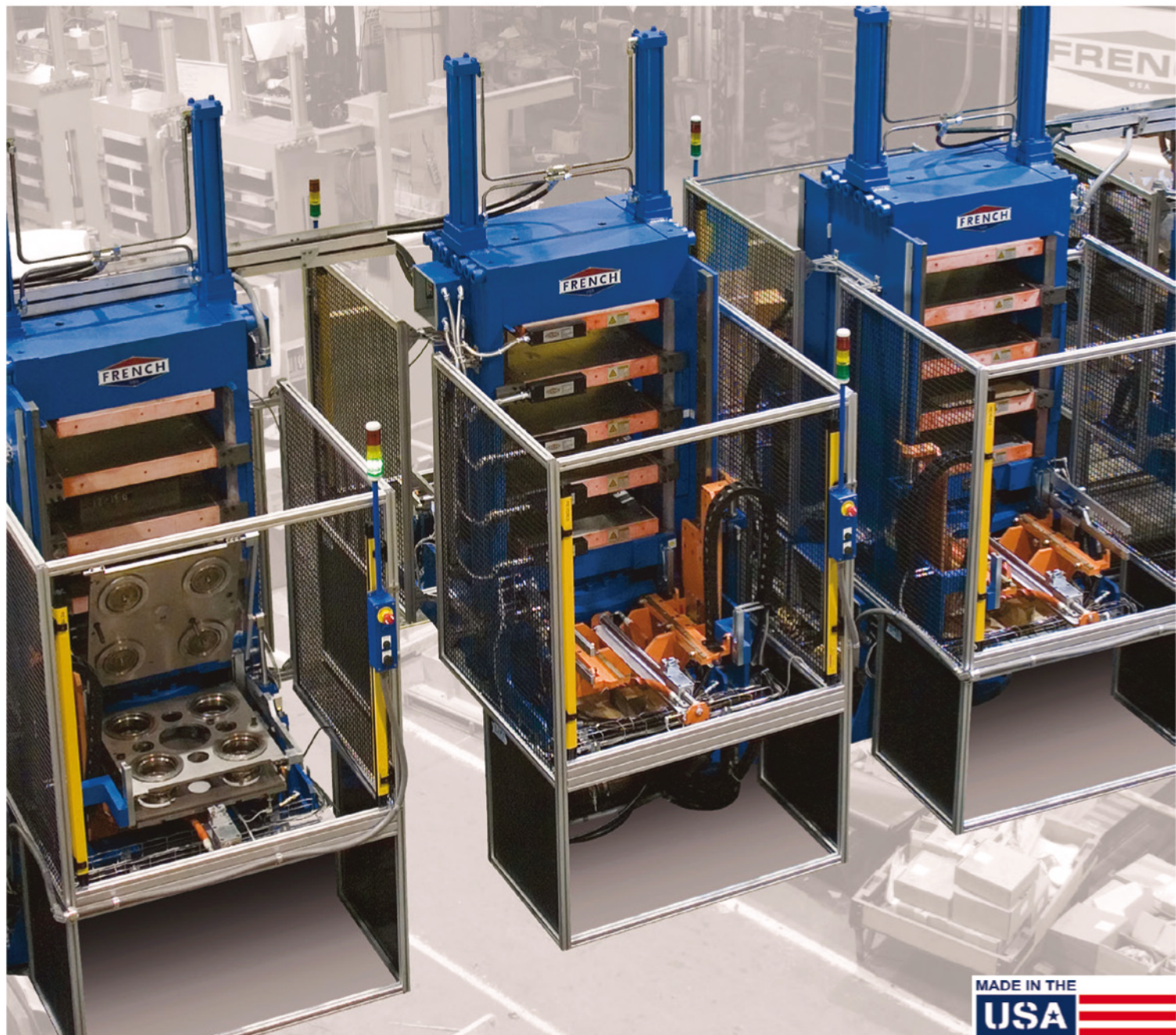
"In one universe, there is the compassionate, even-tempered, curious and independent Thomas," *Newsweek* wrote. Yet in the other: "the family man who publicly skewered his own sister as an example of welfare addiction." Following a series of investigations into the jurist's undisclosed ties with Republican donors, Thomas has faced intense public scrutiny over his ethics.



1982

"Americans are acting to halt the highway carnage," *Newsweek* said of the national campaign against drunk driving, which caused 26,000 deaths a year. In 2021 that number was 13,384—a big decrease from the '80s stat, but a 14 percent increase from 2020. [▶](#)





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CHENNAI, INDIA

## Polar Jubilation

A replica of the *Chandrayaan-3* (or “Mooncraft” in Sanskrit) spacecraft surrounded by students with faces painted like the moon on August 22. Excitement for the Indian Space Research Organisation’s mission was palpable throughout the country, with schoolchildren participating in science fairs, art projects and more in anticipation. The unmanned *Chandrayaan-3* successfully landed a day later, making India the fourth country to land a vessel on the moon and the first to reach its coveted south pole, where frozen water provides promise of drinking water for future explorers.

📷 R. SATISH BABU





**ARIANE 3**

भारत  
INDIA





YOGYAKARTA, INDONESIA

## Blushing Bunny

The giant art installation, *Accomplice*, on display at the Prambanan Temple—one of the largest Hindu temples in Southeast Asia—on August 19. The 148-foot-long and 50-foot-tall pink vinyl figure by American pop artist Brian Donnelly, also known as KAWS, is on display at the UNESCO World Heritage Site for two weeks in the 10th stop of the artist's HOLIDAY global exhibition.

📷 ▶ DEVI RAHMAN



TVER, RUSSIA

## Fiery Retribution?

The crash site and remains of the private jet carrying Yevgeny Prigozhin on August 23 in a field west of Moscow. According to the Russian Federal Air Transport Agency, the head of the Wagner Group was among the 10 passengers killed when the plane went down. The former confidante of Vladimir Putin was perceived as a dead man walking since his mutiny against the Russian president in June.

📷 ▶ WAGNER TELEGRAM



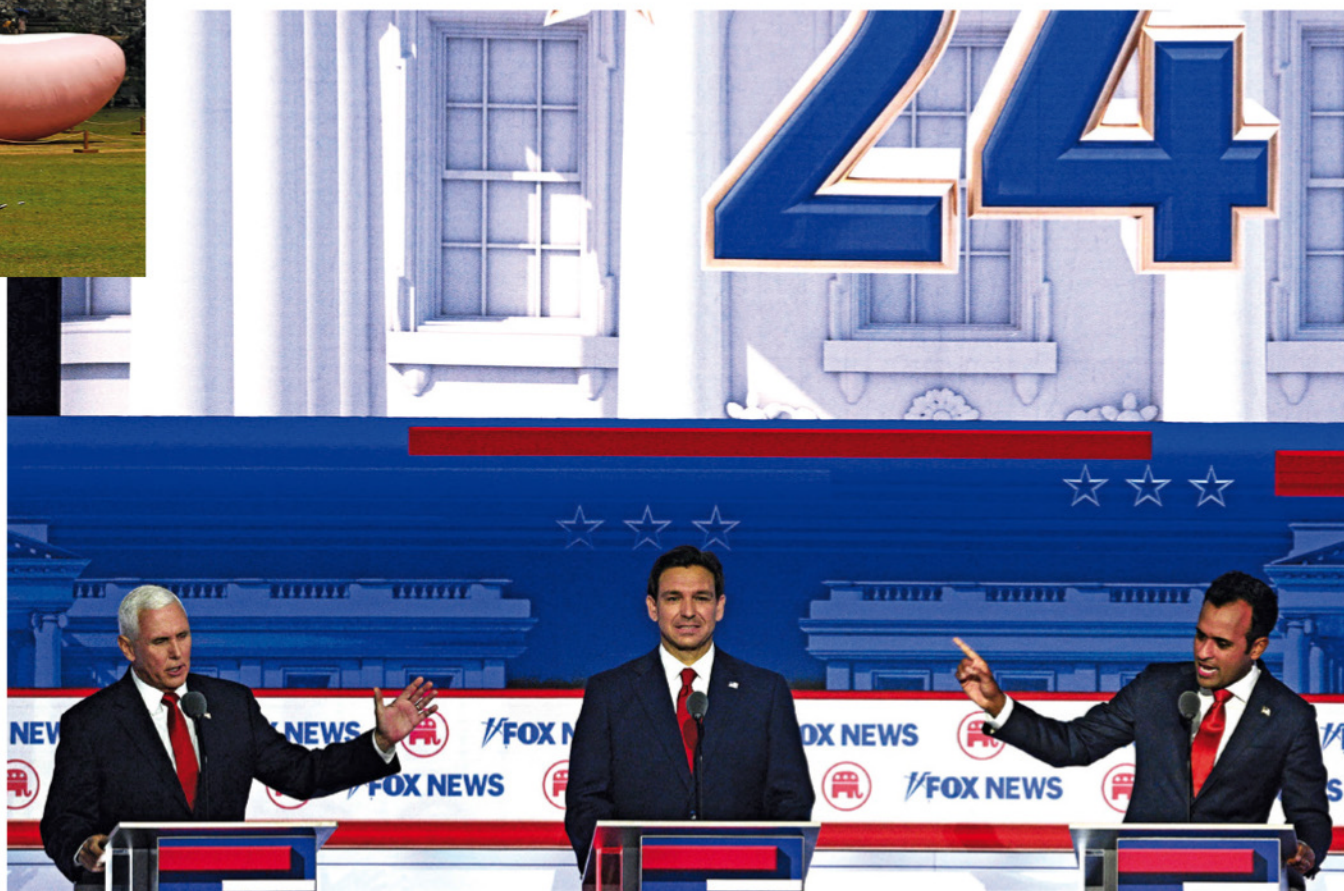
MILWAUKEE

## Republican Brawl

At the first Republican presidential debate on August 23, former Vice President Mike Pence (left) exchanged heated words with entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy (right), while flanking Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. The debate, which included eight candidates, covered abortion, U.S. border security, China, the economy, former President Donald Trump's legal issues and other topics.

📷 ▶ BRENDAN SMIALOWSKI





COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: AFP/GETTY (2); ANADOLU AGENCY/GETTY

# Periscope

NEWS, OPINION + ANALYSIS







NATIONAL SECURITY

# China's Plan to Rule the World's Smart Devices

Police, firefighters and other first responders in the U.S. rely on Chinese communications devices. Spies may be listening in

**■** CHINESE-MADE COMPONENTS IN DEVICES CERTIFIED for use on a federally managed public safety network are designed to be able to send information to servers in China and it's not clear how effective security measures to prevent that are, according to engineers and industry sources with knowledge of the equipment who spoke to *Newsweek*. The components, or cellular internet modules, are generally used to connect objects, from cars to medical equipment to refrigerators, to the internet.

The ubiquity of Chinese cellular internet modules in these and other devices in the so-called Internet of Things (IoT) has prompted concerns in Congress, including an August 7 letter from the House Select Committee on Strategic Competition between the U.S. and the Chinese Communist Party urging regulators to address the potential security risk.

"Using these modules may create a back door for malign Chinese government actors to access and potentially cripple

first-response devices," Select Committee Chairman Republican Rep. Mike Gallagher of Wisconsin, tells *Newsweek*. He adds, "It's just common sense: American critical infrastructure must not be dependent upon CCP [Chinese Communist Party] technology." The letter was also signed by the committee's ranking Democrat, Illinois Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi.

Officials from the FirstNet Authority, the federal agency that manages the emergency network, tell *Newsweek* that Chinese modules are used in devices certified for their system, but say their testing and other measures keep them secure. Security experts and former officials say they are much less confident.

The House committee's letter urges the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to use the same tools Congress gave it to keep Chinese firms, such as Huawei, out of 5G infrastructure in the United States. An FCC spokesman tells *Newsweek*, the commission will "closely review the

by  
**SHAUN  
WATERMAN**  
and  
**DIDI  
KIRSTEN  
TATLOW**

Committee's letter," adding, "We take very seriously the security of U.S. networks and equipment. We have taken strong actions on a bipartisan basis to remove untrustworthy equipment and network operators from U.S. networks."

Two days after the letter was sent, an unsigned editorial in *China Daily*, an English-language state newspaper, commented, "There is apparently no need for politicians in Washington to have any evidence to raise questions about a 'threat' to the national security of the United States from China."

Both the U.S. and China see it as vital to dominate emerging technologies. U.S. administrations have sought to restrict China's imports of cutting-edge technology such as high-performance microchips and to keep Chinese-made networking equipment out of the newly built 5G backbone in the U.S. China has also imposed its own sanctions on some U.S. firms.

### 'Every Police Bodycam'

Data from the cellular modules represents a potential gold mine for Chinese intelligence, which could analyze information collected from millions of connected devices for insights into what is happening in the U.S. at times

of national crisis—or at any other time—according to engineers, former diplomats and intelligence officials.

Western experts are especially alarmed because China's sweeping national security laws compel its technology companies to share any data they have anywhere in the world if requested by the country's intelligence services, says retired British diplomat Charles Parton, who spent more than two decades working on or in China and is now a fellow at the Royal United Services Institute.

Parton says, "Imagine knowing the location minute by minute of every police bodycam in the United States or the U.K."

"Imagine being able to power down every police bodycam in the U.S., disable them with the click of a mouse. China would never need to fight America; they could just turn it off. That is perfectly possible," says Parton, who researched and wrote a white paper on the vulnerabilities created by Western reliance on these modules.

**PUBLIC SAFETY** Police officers and other first responders across the U.S. rely on Chinese-made technology that may not be secure.

FirstNet officials and sources close to device manufacturers say the way Chinese modules are built into FirstNet-certified devices locks them down, and that no data is sent to China.

"Ensuring the security of the FirstNet network is paramount to the success and safety of our public safety users," FirstNet Authority Communications Director Ryan Oremland tells *Newsweek* in written responses to questions. He said there was "a robust process," including extensive testing, to ensure "the highest levels of security are maintained on the network and any equipment or devices that are used on the network."

AT&T, which runs FirstNet under contract from the federal government, audited Chinese-made modules in 2018, the company's head of FirstNet operations, Scott Agnew, tells *Newsweek* by email, "to ensure they can operate safely and securely on the FirstNet network."

"Before being allowed on the network, devices undergo a battery of more than 3,500 tests," he adds, "including examining firmware and data transports."

Manufacturers of devices used on FirstNet approached by *Newsweek* declined to comment on the risk of data transmission to China.

Security experts and former officials say they doubt the modules have been engineered into devices in a way that prevents data transmission. They say the basic capabilities of the modules and the lack of transparency of their manufacturers make them untrustworthy.

Cellular modules are small, matchbox-to-cigarette-pack-sized components, a kind of stripped-down mobile phone. They enable the device which they're inside, to connect to the mobile phone network and become part of the IoT. Consumers benefit from the







**MARKET LEADER** A convention display by Fibocom, a Chinese company that is one of the top two manufacturers of cellular modules in the world.

ease that IoT connectivity provides, and companies benefit from the data they can get from the devices, both to improve their products and to sell additional services.

### State Support

In 2022, there were 202 million cellular IoT connections in the U.S. and 2.8 billion worldwide, according to Satyajit Sinha, principal analyst at IoT Analytics, a Hamburg, Germany-based company. Those numbers are set to more than double—to 450 million and 5.8 billion respectively—over five years. Two-thirds—4 billion—of those cellular connections will be in China, Sinha says

The top two cellular internet module manufacturers in the world in 2022—Quectel and Fibocom—were in China, according to IoT Analytics. Their close ties to the Chinese Communist Party are clear from the significant state support they receive in the form of financial subsidies, grants and tax breaks, according to an extensive review by *Newsweek* of Chinese-language company reports, official documents and state media accounts.

Communist Party leaders make no secret of the role technology will play in their publicly declared goal of global preeminence. IoT was identified as an “emerging strategic industry” as early as 2009. By 2012, the powerful Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, which works closely with the Ministry of State Security, was calling the IoT “strategic high ground.” China’s 13th and 14th Five Year plans, running from 2016 to 2025, identified IoT technology as part of the “information flow” along the Belt and Road Initiative, China’s vast push to build a hold on global infrastructure.

Dominating emerging technology

**“Using these modules may create a back door for malign Chinese government actors to access and potentially cripple first-response devices.”**

markets such as IoT isn’t only an economic goal, say security experts and former officials. China’s leaders believe it is also the key to a new world order that will enable the Communist Party to further consolidate control at home and extend it around the world, according to Liza Tobin, a former national security official who has worked on China issues at the CIA, the Pentagon and the White House. They “understand that the nation which controls the technology...controls the world and gets to write the rules of the road for the digital economy and for the information that flows over those networks,” she says.

The ambition to “build a science and technology superpower” was highlighted in Chinese leader Xi Jinping’s latest book, published in May, titled *On Technology, Self-reliance and Self-improvement*.

In 2022, Quectel, which Beijing has designated a “national champion” in IoT technology, reported annual operating revenue of just under \$2 billion and owned 38.5 percent of the global market for modules by volume, according to Counterpoint Research. That makes it the backbone of China’s burgeoning dominance in the sector.

Altogether, the dozen or so Chinese manufacturers had 77 percent of the global market by volume last year, although that includes the huge Chinese domestic market. Outside China, Chinese companies expanded to capture 53 percent of all sales by volume last year, Counterpoint’s senior research analyst, Soumen Mandal, tells *Newsweek*.

Contributing to this success has been direct and indirect financial

support from the Chinese state, including export tax rebates, other exemptions and offsets designed to support high-tech businesses and a preferential tax rate 10 percentage points lower than the regular company tax of 25 percent. Subsidies also come from local governments. Official media reported in May that the groundbreaking ceremony for Quectel's \$175 million new HQ in a state-sponsored special high-tech commercial and R&D zone in Shanghai was attended by senior local and municipal party officials, indicating government backing of the project and the company.

A *Newsweek* analysis of Chinese-language company reports, official documents and state media accounts shows that Quectel receives hundreds of millions of dollars in direct and indirect support. But *Newsweek* was unable to quantify the exact value of state support for Quectel and other module manufacturers. A 2022 report by the Center for Strategic and International Studies found that most estimates of state support to industry in China "understate" subsidies to private sector companies "including 'national champions' in high-tech sectors."

### 'A Very Different Ballgame'

Two executives at Western IoT companies tell *Newsweek* the impact of the subsidies on their marketplace was obvious: Chinese module manufacturers undercut their Western competitors' prices by 15 or 20 percent while paying their top sales staff four or five times what they would earn at one of those competitors.

One executive noted that Quectel reported a gross margin of 19 percent

in 2022, less than half of most Western competitors. The 6,000-personnel Quectel says that working in research and development also gives it an edge over Western peers.

For Chinese technology companies, the strategic imperatives of the state were more important than profits, Tobin says, "It's a very different ballgame."

Quectel did not respond to *Newsweek's* emailed questions on data transmission, its links to the state, subsidies and financial performance, but in its 2022 annual report, the company acknowledged government backing for its technology. "Our country has established various policies to speed up the development of intelligentization for different industries," the report states, using a term that can encompass digital transformation, big data and artificial intelligence. The report says the applications of Quectel modules in IoT technology "are as many as the countless stars in the sky."

In becoming the dominant global players in IoT modules, Chinese companies would be following the path of other technology companies that became hard to catch once they established an edge, from Microsoft in personal computer software to Huawei in 5G infrastructure.

### Meaningless Security Tests?

Chinese-made cellular internet modules are increasingly ubiquitous in IoT devices made by household-name U.S. consumer companies such as Amazon's Ring, Tesla and Comcast/Xfinity.

They're also in more than 130 devices certified by the FirstNet Authority for use on their dedicated first-responder network.

The problem, say experts, is that the firmware, which controls the modules, can be updated over-the-air by the manufacturer, changing its capabilities, for instance, to upgrade it or fix security flaws.

"If you can update the firmware,

KEVIN DIETSCH/GETTY



**CONCERNS** Rep. Mike Gallagher (middle row, left) chairs a House committee on strategic competition between the U.S. and China.



you can change the capabilities at any moment,” says Jack Wilmer, former chief information security officer at the Department of Defense.

Over-the-air updates are a powerful security tool, used by companies such as Apple to push fixes for newly discovered vulnerabilities out to hundreds of millions of iPhone users. But a malicious manufacturer could use that capability to open back doors in the module and try to steal data, he says.

“You can test a component, to see if it’s secure,” Wilmer says. “But if it can be updated over-the-air, that test is meaningless the minute it’s updated.”

Firmware updates could also be used to “brick” the modules, rendering them permanently inoperable. According to the letter sent by the House Committee, that happened when Russia stole \$5 million worth of farm equipment from Ukraine. John Deere vehicles were made inoperable when the Western-made modules inside were disabled remotely.

Industry sources tell *Newsweek* that many FirstNet-certified device manufacturers hosted firmware updates for their Chinese-made cellular modules on a U.S.-based portal and were able to check them for any malicious code.

But it is not just the updates that are a problem. Testing also might not find capabilities hidden in the module, says David Klein, an IoT specialist and security analyst for Baltimore, Maryland-based Independent Security Evaluators.

“Maybe it isn’t compromised in a way that it’s always sending traffic,” which would be visible during testing, he says. But the manufacturer could easily build a back door in the module, “so that when needed, they can ask it for data. That is a little bit tougher to discover than something that is constantly transmitting.”

Technical issues like that require

## **China’s sweeping national security laws compel its technology companies to share any data they have anywhere in the world if requested by the country’s intelligence services.**

manufacturers to exercise caution when considering the use of Chinese technology, Eric Goldstein, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) executive assistant director for cybersecurity tells *Newsweek* via email.

CISA, an agency of the Department of Homeland Security, urges “all organizations to understand and consider the cybersecurity and supply chain risks associated with devices made in China or subject to PRC [People’s Republic of China] data security laws,” he says.

The complexity of the technology and the lack of transparency about the manufacturers make it impossible to trust Chinese-made modules, John Cohen, former acting undersecretary of intelligence at the Department of Homeland Security, says.

“You have to assume that data communicated via any IT, computer or communications technology made by a Chinese company can be accessed by Chinese intelligence,” Cohen says.

“Chinese plans to grow their presence in these new technology markets and eventually dominate them aren’t just part of their economic strategy. They know they can access the data these devices produce and they are also a major part of Beijing’s intelligence collection strategies,” says Cohen, now a senior expert at the Argonne National Laboratory as well

as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University’s Center for Security Studies. Cohen says state and local governments were a priority for Chinese intelligence, but they had more limited capabilities than the federal government to detect any misuse of the modules and were given only limited federal help.

Addressing the risks posed by Chinese-made technologies is a complex problem for policymakers because U.S. businesses have spent decades outsourcing production to China, according to Tobin, who is now at the Special Competitive Studies Project, a think tank set up by former Google CEO Eric Schmidt to focus on the U.S. technological contest with China.

“We forgot it was important to make things,” she says. It was a pattern that had been repeated too many times, she adds, giving the examples of Huawei and ZTE in 5G, or DJI, another Chinese tech company, in consumer drones, as well as the markets for solar panels and electric vehicle batteries.

Western competitors do not have the production capacity to make a total ban on Chinese module imports a realistic option, she says, but policymakers needed to consider how to protect security interests and keep Chinese technology out of vital industries. “Not on Air Force One, not in our electricity grid, not in our water systems,” she says.

“Our critical infrastructure shouldn’t be dependent on a strategic rival,” Tobin adds. “This is a country that we’re preparing to go to war with, if we have to.” ■

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# EVERYTHING

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YOU KNOW ABOUT

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# DIET

Despite a proliferation of diets supposedly based on science, most theories about **what to eat** and why are flawed

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IS

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# WRONG

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by DAVID H. FREEDMAN

Photograph by C.J. BURTON



**T**HE ARTIFICIAL SWEETENER ASPARTAME is found in most diet sodas and more than 6,000 other food products consumed by hundreds of millions of people around the world. So on July 14 when a group working under the auspices of the World Health Organization warned that the sweetener “possibly” causes cancer and that “high consumers” of aspartame-sweetened products were at risk, the news went viral. So did pronouncements a few days later that aspartame was, in fact, pretty safe. “The WHO announcement doesn’t mean aspartame is linked to cancer,” an official from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration told NPR, and a second committee of the WHO agreed.

Confused yet?

Public health messaging is often a difficult tight-rope walk (see: COVID-19) and that is especially true for anything related to food—a matter of profound importance and intense public interest, about which science can’t seem to make up its mind. Nutrition scientists and other food-and-health experts have for years been feeding the public conflicting and muddled advice about food, diet and health. Is it a good idea to count calories, avoid carbs, load up on meat? Is it best to eat only natural foods, avoid gluten, go vegan? Science can’t provide definitive answers.

It’s no wonder, then, that the diet industry is a mess of competing and contradictory claims, including the recent wave of seemingly magical cures and miracle regimens. Diets that emphasize intermittent fasting, nurturing good gut bacteria and cutting out carbs have surged in popularity, but their basis in science is sketchy. The arrival of a new generation of astonishingly effective weight-loss drugs offers the tantalizing prospect of blunting America’s obesity problem. But it’s not clear if a lifetime drug regime will be safe or affordable for the 42 percent of Americans who are obese.

“It’s very hard for consumers to find consistent dietary advice,” says Regan Bailey, a professor of nutrition at Texas A&M University, where she is associate director of precision nutrition for the Institute for Advancing Health Through Agriculture. “For every study that finds a particular approach works, another one comes out that’s against it.”

Getting to the bottom of diet science won’t be easy. Part of the problem is that research on food

is terrifically challenging. To do it right requires tracking what people eat over long periods of time, which is expensive, and keeping them on diet plans that they may not like, which is as easy as herding cats. Because health problems tend to emerge over many years from complex causes, it’s difficult to trace them directly to diet alone, never mind particular foods or individual ingredients.

That’s why so many theories abound that may not have a sound scientific basis. What’s needed more than new theories are practical solutions grounded in the relatively small universe of unimpeachable facts about how to eat healthfully. That’s true in the realm of public policy, where a movement is afoot to protect children from the ravages of the food industry. In July, for instance, the WHO called for countries around the world to implement regulations with a particular eye to protecting children from junk-food marketing.

It’s also true in the myriad decisions individuals have to make when shopping, cooking and deciding what to have for lunch or feed the kids. Although much of the dietary advice currently circulating in the zeitgeist is questionable, *Newsweek* has sifted through the myriad competing and confounding claims and separated what is factual about healthful eating from what is merely speculative. What’s left are a few bedrock principles to keep in mind.

### Do Calories Really Matter?

MAKING THE DIETS OF AMERICANS HEALTHIER has long been primarily about reducing the rate of obesity. And for good reason, notes Howard Sachs, a physician and associate professor at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School. “When I see

**“SUGAR IN ULTRA-PROCESSED FOOD CREATES A LOT OF PROBLEMS, BUT NOT THE SUGAR IN HOMEMADE DESSERTS? THE FACT THAT WE STILL DON’T KNOW WHAT LINKS ULTRA-PROCESSED TO DIFFERENT DISEASES CAN’T BE USED AS A REASON TO IGNORE THE EVIDENCE.”**



**SUGAR COATING**

Practical advice, such as cutting back on sugary soda, is more important than impressive new food theories, say experts.



JACK ANDERSEN/GETTY



a patient who's overweight, I have to consider whether this person is at risk of cardiac disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis and sleep apnea," he says.

For more than half a century doctors and public-health experts have been pushing out the message that recommending changes in diet is the best way of tackling the problem of excess weight. (Research strongly links exercise to better health but not in any clear way to weight loss.) The conventional recommendation for healthful weight loss has been some form of calorie tracking, with a goal of reducing daily total calorie consumption. This approach tends to place less emphasis on which foods to eat and more on an overall diet that is as satisfying as possible while still trimming calories.

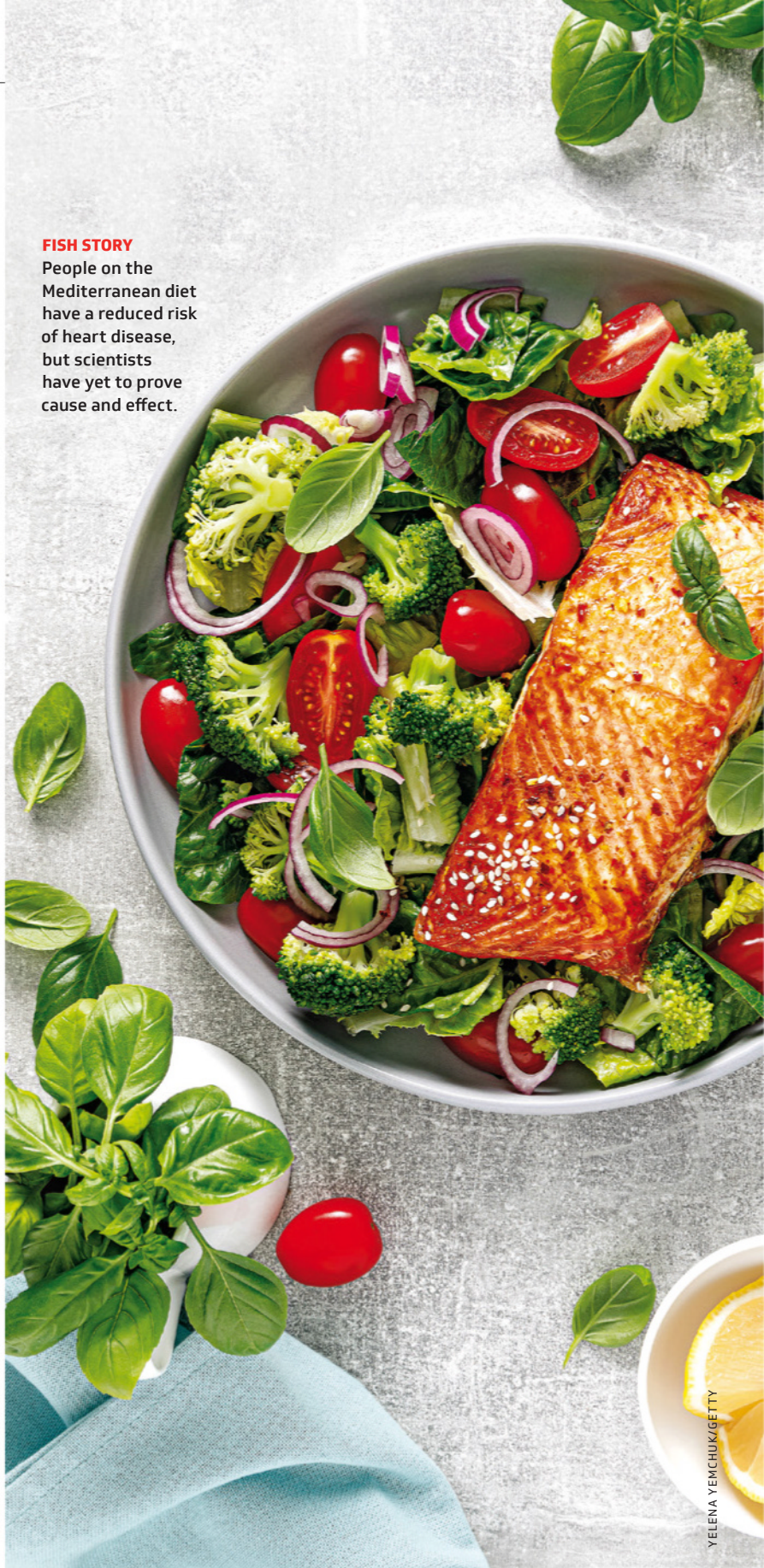
Research has consistently found that diets involving some form of calorie-tracking—such as Weight-Watchers, which uses a “point” system loosely based on calories—are on average more effective than other approaches to losing weight and keeping it off. But there's a big catch: Most people fail on these diets anyway. Studies have shown, for example, that the great majority of people with obesity who are encouraged by a physician to lose weight through dietary changes don't lose weight at all. And more than two-thirds of those who do lose weight on a doctor's advice gained more than two-thirds of the weight back, on average, within three years, according to a 2018 review study by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Johns Hopkins University.

The poor track record of the calorie-based approach to healthy eating is one reason it has been under fire in recent years. Some experts have called into question the notion that people should be encouraged to make dietary changes to overcome obesity at all on the grounds that it's too difficult and can be pointlessly shaming.

Recognizing that most people struggle to cut calories, various dietary scientists and clinicians have pushed alternatives to the calorie-tracking paradigm. One that gets a lot of attention is the very-low-carbohydrate diet, often referred to as a “keto” diet—the most popular diet among those that restrict particular food types, according to a 2022 study published in the journal *Current Developments in Nutrition*. More than 23 million people say they follow keto diets, according to the International Food Information Council, fueling a \$12-billion-a-year industry supplying foods tailored to keto, according to the

#### FISH STORY

People on the Mediterranean diet have a reduced risk of heart disease, but scientists have yet to prove cause and effect.



YELENA YEMCHUK/GETTY





market-research firm Mordor Intelligence.

The theory behind the diet, most prominently championed by Harvard University researcher and physician David Ludwig, is that people gain excess weight not when they consume too many calories, but when their bodies lose the ability to deliver the energy from food to muscles.

That happens, the theory goes, because refined sugar and carbohydrates from grains and fruits (which the body breaks down into another type of sugar) tend to flood too quickly into the bloodstream, leading the body to produce large amounts of insulin to try to get the sugar to the muscles. Over time, muscles can become resistant to those big hits of insulin, and the body ends up converting the sugars to body fat instead. The keto solution to this “insulin resistance” is to stop eating just about all carbs. People on full keto diets typically try to get about three-quarters of their calories from fat, and almost all the rest from protein.

convenient, much-loved foods such as pasta, bread and most desserts, they’re likely to develop cravings that make it nearly impossible for them to stick with the diet over the long term, researchers say.

“It’s not helpful to focus on just one component of diet,” says Michelle Cardel, a registered dietitian and assistant professor at the University of Florida and senior director of global clinical research and nutrition at WeightWatchers.

The Mediterranean diet is a more highly-regarded healthy-eating scheme. While there isn’t a specific Mediterranean diet industry, WeightWatchers and most other popular services offer ways to adhere to a diet more or less in keeping with its principles. There’s no official definition of the diet, but a key component is eating more unsaturated fats such those found in olive oil, nuts and especially oily fish. Advocates also advise eating vegetables, whole grains and lean sources of protein such as poultry and beans, while

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**“NOT EVERYONE HAS ACCESS TO A FARMER’S MARKET  
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A big attraction of keto is that adherents can eat large portions of whatever non-carb food they want, feasting freely, for example, on steak, cheese and eggs. As unhealthy as that may sound, research tends to back the notion that sticking with a keto diet can lead to losing excess weight, working on average about as well as a calorie-tracking approach. Keto also reduces the risk of diabetes.

Most experts, though, are skeptical of the keto diet. The large amounts of saturated fats typically consumed by keto adherents can lead to high cholesterol levels closely linked to heart disease, as confirmed by a 46-year-long study involving more than 18,000 subjects published in 2021 in *JAMA Cardiology* among other studies. Fruits and whole grains, which get cut out in a keto diet, are also generally considered important components of a healthy diet. In addition, when people deprive themselves of ubiquitous,

cutting down on sugar, red meat and saturated fat.

Studies show that people who follow a Mediterranean diet tend to show a reduced risk of heart disease. They’re also less likely to be obese, even though calorie tracking isn’t part of the diet. However, these studies haven’t established beyond a doubt that people who eat this way are healthier from the diet alone. It’s possible that people who follow a Mediterranean diet are healthy due to other factors, such as exercise and moderate calorie intake, and are simply more likely than others to eat this way. A 2022 Stanford University study, however, did convincingly show that the Mediterranean diet worked as well as the much more restrictive keto diet in fending off insulin resistance.

Other diet approaches include plant-based diets, gluten-free diets, “microbiome” diets that aim to regulate gut bacteria and fasting during certain





times each day. Studies show some health benefits to each approach, but there is no convincing evidence that any one is better than the others at making its adherents healthier. For most of the public, they hold little appeal as a way of eating.

Still, these diets have their vocal supporters. Intermittent fasting, in particular, has quickly become the most popular diet in the U.S., according to the International Food Information Council. About one out of 10 people who say they're following a diet claim intermittent fasting is their preferred approach. The theory behind it is that frequent fasting can help people get out of the habit of constantly eating and gives the body time to focus on burning the food that has already been eaten, rather than on digesting new food. Fasting can also trigger a stress response in the body that promotes cell repair. Usually, intermittent fasters say they fast either for entire days two or more days a week, or else for a large chunk of the day. There is no agreed-upon measure for what counts as intermittent fasting other than following some sort of timing scheme in eating. The big appeal to this approach is being able to eat without restrictions (except, of course, when fasting).

Intermittent fasting has its downsides. The biggest one: having to fast off and on for the rest of your life. Fasting also doesn't do a better job of taking

off excess weight than conventional calorie-tracking, according to a joint Northwestern University and University of Illinois study published in July in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*. And weight loss via the calorie approach delivers the same cell-repair benefits, without having to fast, according to a 2017 study published in *Ageing Research Reviews*.

Microbiome diets are fast gaining in popularity. The idea is to eat food that is friendly to good bacteria that lives in the intestines, which has been shown to have an influence on mental and physical well-being, and unfriendly to bad bacteria. The approach encourages high-fiber foods like fruits and vegetables. Certain vegetables—such as leeks, asparagus and seaweed—are held to be especially helpful to maintaining a healthy microbiome. Research has shown that the type and quantity of bacteria in the gut can indeed be linked to both weight and health, but there has yet to be any solid proof that switching to particular microbiome-promoting foods can reliably produce improvements.

One of the most promising approaches, still in its infancy, is that of “precision nutrition,” which aims to tailor a diet to suit each individual's unique biology, health, lifestyle and goals. An \$8 billion industry has already sprung up to cater to would-be precision-nutrition eaters, offering a range of lab tests and questionnaires—assisted, in some cases, by artificial intelligence. Research is in the early stages, most notably an NIH study announced in May that will enroll 10,000 people to examine how AI can determine which foods raise or lower health risks for individuals. Most experts say that effective precision-nutrition schemes are still years off.

**“WHEN I SEE A PATIENT WHO’S  
OVERWEIGHT, I HAVE TO CONSIDER  
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ARTHRITIS AND SLEEP APNEA.”**



FROM LEFT: BRENDAN SMALOWSKI/GETTY; JENI FOTODIGITALITY





**BAD FAT**

People on keto diets often eat food with lots of saturated fats, which can raise cholesterol and lead to heart disease. Left: David Ludwig, a keto advocate.



Any of these diets can work—as long as they reduce calorie intake, says Jamy Ard, a physician, epidemiologist and vice dean for clinical research at Wake Forest University, and president-elect of the Obesity Society, an influential academic research association. “Yes, calories matter. Downplaying that does people a disservice by getting them to focus on the wrong things,” he says. “I see people eating only organic, natural, healthy foods, and they can’t figure out why they’re gaining weight.”

Many of the new diets are too expensive for most people. They often involve having to buy more fresh,

whole foods—which can be out of reach of people with low incomes, who also tend to be at highest risk of diet-related poor health. And some of the diets may simply be unappealing for many. “The right diet has to come down to what’s livable and sustainable for you,” says University of Florida’s Cardel.

### A New Villain

AS IF DIETARY SCIENCE HASN’T ALREADY GIVEN US a large enough crop of competing diet theories, researchers have been busy promoting a new one: Blame it all on “ultra-processed” foods.





The food industry is all too eager to ply the public with the fatty, sugary, calorie-dense foods it craves—Americans get about half their calories from junk food, according to a 2022 study from the University of North Carolina and other researchers, with a predictable impact on health. But a spate of studies over the past five years have made the increasingly strident claim that the food industry is churning out food products that are attacking health in ways that go beyond merely cramming them with fat and sugar. Ultra-processed foods, insist some researchers, are the sole cause of climbing obesity rates and

**“IT’S VERY HARD FOR CONSUMERS TO FIND CONSISTENT DIETARY ADVICE. FOR EVERY STUDY THAT FINDS A PARTICULAR APPROACH WORKS, ANOTHER ONE COMES OUT THAT’S AGAINST IT.”**



#### FOOD MYSTERY

Is it a good idea to count calories, avoid carbs, load up on meat? Is it best to eat only natural foods, avoid gluten, go vegan? Science can't provide definitive answers.

all our food-related health problems. The evidence, however, does not definitively support these claims.

The term “ultra-processed” was introduced in 2009 by Carlos Monteiro, a nutrition researcher at the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil, who defined it as food prepared with ingredients and equipment not found in most kitchens. More than two-thirds of all food sold by the packaged food industry falls into that definition—including most plain yogurt sold in supermarkets—leading some scientists to question the term’s value. “There’s no agreed-upon scientific meaning for it,” says Texas A&M’s Bailey. The label, she notes, can imply baby carrots from a supermarket are bad for you, while equally improbably deeming candy made in a home kitchen perfectly healthy. To avoid confronting that apparent contradiction, most researchers seem to treat the term as a catchier, more scientific-sounding way of describing junk food.

Studies that link the consumption of junk food to obesity and chronic disease have failed to establish cause and effect. In other words, it is not clear whether junk food alone is making healthy people sick, or people who eat junk food also tend to be more vulnerable to health problems for other reasons, such as lack of exercise and lack of access to good healthcare, education and other resources. A 2019 study from Harvard found that junk-food eaters are not only more vulnerable to heart disease but they also have higher rates of death from injury, which supports the notion that junk food may not be the only factor.

The claims about ultra-processed foods grew louder after a 2019 National Institutes of Health study in which 20 people were put on an ultra-processed diet (examples: mac and cheese, chicken nuggets) for two weeks, and on a “minimally processed” diet (oatmeal, salad, grilled chicken) for two weeks.



# 7

## PROVEN WAYS TO EAT HEALTHFULLY

**Skip the junk, cook your own food** ▶ BY DAVID H. FREEDMAN

**IF THERE IS ONE THING THAT DIET** science has made clear, it is that eating foods packed with saturated fats, sugars and salt makes it difficult to maintain a healthy weight, and can raise the risks of many major diseases. That's why avoiding junk food—the fatty, sweet and salty treats from soda to chips to candy bars that are heavily marketed by the food industry—is at the top of most nutritionists' and other medical experts' lists of healthy eating tips. The advice tends to diverge from there. Here is some of what rests on good science:



**Eat more home-cooked meals.** Cooking at home is correlated with healthier outcomes, even though scientists disagree as to why.



**Eat more veggies, fruits and whole grains.** These foods are all loaded with important nutrients, and

can help reduce the temptation to gorge on fatty, sugary, salty foods. What's more, these foods don't lead to surges in blood sugar that can wreak havoc with the body, as many other foods can.



**Be aware of calories.** Despite the oft-heard claim that calories don't matter, the vast majority

of experts insist that they do, and that people who take in more calories than they spend through activity are going to end up with an unhealthy weight. Although rigorous calorie-tracking is too burdensome for most people, simply being aware that soda, fried foods and fatty burgers are dense with calories can help.



**Be wary of gimmicky or extreme diets.** Avoid diets that exhort followers to load way up on

certain foods and completely cut out others, or that dictate exactly what needs to be eaten when, or

require big doses of an unproven supplement. Most people can't stick with these sorts of diets. And some extreme diets, such as liquid-only "cleanses," may be dangerous.



**Cut down on red meat and processed meat.**

Red meat—and yes, say experts, that includes pork, despite the industry's efforts to market it as a white meat—tends to be loaded with saturated fats. And packaged cold cuts, including poultry, contain added salt, sugar and fat.



**Focus on habits and lifestyle, not willpower.**

White-knuckling a diet that leaves you hungry or craving certain foods can produce fast, dramatic results, but most dieters tend to gain all the lost weight back, and more. Better to make small changes that can become easy-to-stick-with routines and then add in more small, healthy changes over time.



**Walk.** It won't by itself reliably lead to weight loss, but it will almost certainly lead to better health. And it will help with achieving a healthy weight if combined with healthy changes to diet.

Start with a bit of relaxed walking each day, and slowly increase the distance and rate over time.

The balance of fat, protein and carbs were the same for the two diets, and the subjects were allowed to eat as much as they wanted at each meal. The results: They ate about 500 calories per day more on the ultra-processed diet, gaining weight from it.

The study didn't make clear how the ultra-processed foods led to more calorie intake. But those foods did pack in far more calories per mouthful than the non-ultra-processed versions, and many researchers—including those who ran the study—point out such "calorie density" promotes excess eating. That's because cramming more fat and sugar into a single bite, as most junk foods do, makes foods taste and feel extremely stimulating and satisfying. They're "hyperpalatable."

Many researchers and healthy-eating advocates interpret the results of that NIH study to claim that it represents a newly discovered, special harm from the food sold by the prepared-food industry beyond its well-known appeal and calorie-density. It's possible that something as of yet unidentified about junk food is causing special harm. But scientists haven't clearly established that claim. However, that hasn't stopped some researchers from insisting that it's real and doing damage.

Monteiro, the researcher who coined the term, is one of those researchers claiming special harm. "Sugar in ultra-processed food creates a lot of

## "THE RIGHT DIET HAS TO

problems, but not the sugar in homemade desserts," he says. "The fact that we still don't know what links ultra-processed to different diseases can't be used as a reason to ignore the evidence."

The claim of special harm beyond hyperpalatability might be settled by studies comparing, say, food-company mac-and-cheese to home-cooked mac-and-cheese, rather than comparing it to a salad. But researchers don't seem eager to clarify that point. "The key questions about ultra-processed foods aren't being addressed," says Cardel. Another point that needs to be taken into account is the difficulty many people would have in giving up





## COME DOWN TO WHAT'S LIVABLE AND **SUSTAINABLE** FOR YOU."

highly processed foods, she says. "I don't find the fear mongering over ultra-processed food helpful. It's elitist and unrealistic to assume everyone can just switch to an unprocessed diet."

### Drugs for Weight Loss

AMID THE CONFUSION, MEANWHILE, THERE'S SOME good news for the multitudes who have struggled unsuccessfully against the pull of junk food: A new generation of diabetes and weight-loss drugs is flipping the long, discouraging odds for successfully losing weight for many people with obesity. These drugs, including Ozempic, Wegovy and Mounjaro, imitate certain

**DON'T FORGET THE JOY**  
Just about any diet can work, as long as it reduces calorie intake. But to be sustainable, it has to be appealing.  
Above: a biscuit factory.

hormones that can reduce appetite and cravings.

"They are a game-changer," says the University of Massachusetts' Sachs. "I have patients who have never been able to lose an ounce losing 20 pounds in three months. It's phenomenal." Currently, these drugs must be injected every two or four weeks, but pill versions are on the drawing board, which will likely add to the interest in taking them.

These drugs come with drawbacks. For one thing, health insurance covers most of the costs only for those people diagnosed with diabetes or, in some cases, for patients with another significant obesity-related health problem, such as heart disease.





certain way is compared to the health of those who eat differently. But while cohort studies can show that a certain diet seems associated with certain health problems, they can't show whether or not the diet causes the problems. That's because people who choose to eat a certain way may be different in other ways, such as income, ethnicity, education, community resources, exercise habits, and much more—and there's usually no good way to say for sure which factors cause a given health problem.

One way to avoid the limitations of cohort studies is to fashion a randomized controlled trial, or RCT, in which people are randomly assigned to different diets. Any emerging differences in the health of the different diet groups could then be attributed with some confidence to the diet, because everything else about the groups should, on average, be the same.

There are reasons why dietary researchers don't do many RCTs. Getting people to agree to adopt a diet they may not like is difficult. And those who do agree may have trouble sticking to the diet—which is why a good dietary RCT requires carefully monitoring what the subjects eat 24/7, at enormous inconvenience and cost. Requiring people to eat junk food for long periods of time would also be unethical, given the health risks. That's why the NIH study had only 20 patients eating ultra-processed food for a mere two weeks—numbers considered too small for reliable results.

No wonder scientists and clinicians can't agree on the best approach to a healthy diet. And even if they did, would it have much of an effect on Americans' health? Haunting the entire endeavor of improving the public's diet is the fact that most people simply can't, or won't, make the long-term eating changes that experts recommend. Everyone hears that junk food isn't good for them, but it still dominates the diet of Americans, with no sign of change. Junk food is not only hyperpalatable, it's also cheap and convenient.

"Not everyone has access to a farmer's market or the time to cook food," says Bailey. "We haven't begun to understand all the socioeconomic factors involved in helping people make changes." No number of new study conclusions is going to change those facts.

Having largely failed at convincing most people to switch to some type of healthier diet—and facing growing criticism for even trying, out of concern that it's a form of shaming—experts have taken to calling for regulation that would force the food industry to stop selling junk food. Although there isn't

Others who hope to enlist the drugs for weight loss and can get a prescription would have to shell out nearly \$1,000 a month—as would anyone who doesn't have good healthcare insurance, no matter how sick they are. Obesity and its related ills disproportionately fall on the poor and those in groups traditionally underserved by healthcare. "The people who are most at risk for obesity usually don't have insurance," says Bailey. Costs may eventually come down, but right now there's little sign of that happening any time soon.

Other drawbacks to the new drugs include gastrointestinal distress and other side effects. And stopping the drugs tends to result in regaining all the weight, which means most people would need to stay on them for the rest of their lives to keep the weight off. The drugs are so new that the potential long-term side-effects have not yet been studied.

For these reasons, dietary changes are likely to remain the main approach to losing excess weight for some time. "I don't know if we'll ever see a day when people can just take a drug and not have to worry about what they eat," says Wake Forest's Ard. He notes that even people who are on the drugs have to pay close attention to what they eat, because a poor diet could lead to muscle loss or other health problems, or might even interfere with weight loss.

## The Limits of Knowledge

THE PROBLEMS OF DIETARY SCIENCE STEM FROM THE enormous complexity of the relationship between food and health, and the length of time—the better part of a lifetime—it takes for many health problems to appear.

Most diet-and-health research is based on "cohort" studies, in which the health of people who eat a

### HEALTHY SIDE EFFECT

A new generation of diabetes and weight-loss drugs that reduce appetites and cravings is helping many people with obesity lose weight. Above: an injection pen for diabetics.





a lot of hard evidence that restricting the marketing or even sale of junk food would improve the public's dietary health, the assumption seems reasonable. That's why in July the WHO called for countries around the world to implement such regulation to protect children from junk-food marketing.

A regulation like that may be a pipe dream in the U.S., where many people, and most Republicans in Congress, oppose restrictions or taxes on food marketing or sales. "These intrinsically healthy foods have to be regulated," says Monteiro. "But the culture in the U.S. is very much against it." (Republicans in Congress are willing to make one exception to that resistance to food regulation: They are currently pushing a ban on junk food purchases made with federal food-aid benefits. Democrats insist such a law would unfairly target the poor.)

Marion Nestle, a New York University professor emerita of nutrition and a leading advocate for reforming America's diet, proposed a series of modest junk-food-related regulations in a 2022 paper in the *American Journal of Public Health*. But she conceded that the proposed regulations "may seem unrealistic," and "would confront formidable attitudinal, legal, and legislative hurdles." She called them "aspirational."

Other than the proposed legislation impacting food-aid recipients, no junk-food restrictions are currently under active consideration by Congress. Two California cities, Berkeley and Perris, have banned grocery stores from displaying junk food at check-out counters. Even the U.K., which has proven far friendlier to anti-junk-food regulation, was forced in June to back off a planned ban of two-for-

## "YES, THE ENVIRONMENT PROMOTES UNHEALTHY EATING, BUT THAT'S NOT THE SAME AS SAYING WE CAN'T ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO TAKE SOME LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR MANAGING WHAT THEY CAN IN THEIR DIET."

### JUNK-FOOD NATION

Lacking realistic hope of curbing massive junk-food output, it's unclear what dietary changes might realistically be sold to Americans. Below: nutrition expert Marion Nestle.

one discounts for junk food items in grocery stores until at least 2025, due to objections over consumers having to pay more for food—even if it's junk food.

Lacking any realistic hope of curbing the massive output of junk food, it's unclear what dietary changes might realistically be sold to the American public. "Diet isn't simple," says Bailey, "but people need to take home a simple message."

Still, there may be some wiggle room for improvement. Although most doctors can't convince their patients to make dietary changes, studies suggest most doctors don't follow the recommended approaches for counseling patients who are overweight, which include tailoring advice to each patient's specific eating habits and scheduling a follow-up conversation. Several studies indicate that doctors who follow these recommendations usually succeed in guiding patients to at least modest weight loss.

This sort of practical advice, rather than the hawking of impressive-sounding theories, is where the most progress can be made, says Ard. "We need to spend more time on the science of implementing our ideas and moving them into practice," he says. "Yes, the environment promotes unhealthy eating, but that's not the same as saying we can't encourage people to take some level of responsibility for managing what they can in their diet. We can help them make small changes that can lead to significant impact." Getting people to cut down on sugary sodas, he says, would be a good place to start.

As long as critics lambast such counseling as useless and shaming, and as long as nutrition scientists clash over differing views of the ideal diet while howling for regulation that has no chance of happening, little is likely to change. The consequences are measured in the millions of lives cut short. **N**





# America's **BEST** Customer Service



2024

**H**OW WE SHOP HAS CHANGED DRASTICALLY in recent years. Here's a telling statistic: online grocery delivery services are now valued at over \$286 billion with projections of continued growth. But companies still need to offer excellent customer service, even if that looks a little different than it used to.

It's not surprising that we place a high value on receiving good service. Having consistent, friendly, helpful experiences with an establishment makes it easy to become a loyal customer. We remember and appreciate when someone goes out of their way to help us.

To help our readers make informed choices, *Newsweek* and the global market research and consumer data firm Statista are proud to announce our sixth edition of America's Best Customer Service 2024. This award recognizes 724 brands in 166 categories that go above and beyond to make their customers feel special.

We hope this ranking is useful for you and your family, and we wish you satisfying and successful shopping.

► **Nancy Cooper**, *Global Editor in Chief*





ANDREI MOLDOVEANU/GETTY





## Brick-and-Mortar

### CLOTHING

Apparel	1	Lucky Brand	92.81
	2	Lane Bryant	89.53
	3	White House Black Market	89.22
	4	J. Crew	88.76
	5	Talbots	88.66
Athletic Apparel	1	Scheels	89.73
	2	Adidas	86.36
	3	Under Armour	86.18
	4	Athleta	85.71
	5	Lululemon Athletica	85.67
Baby/Children's Products	1	Pottery Barn Kids	87.67
	2	Gymboree	86.84
	3	Carter's	86.51
	4	The Children's Place	85.38
	5	Janie and Jack	84.86
Bridal Fashion	1	Vera Wang	90.49
	2	BHLDN	87.65
	3	Bella Bridesmaids	87.23
Department Stores	1	Von Maur	93.88
	2	Bloomingdale's	90.24
	3	Nordstrom	86.85
	4	Dillard's	83.87
	5	Kohl's	82.27
Discount Clothing	1	Bealls	85.40
	2	TJ Maxx	78.97
	3	Marshalls	78.48
Fashion Accessories	1	Brighton	94.76
	2	BoxLunch	89.92
	3	Hot Topic	87.55
	4	Spencer's	85.40
	5	francesca's	84.96

Footwear Retailers (multi-brand)	1	Journeys	84.06
	2	Shoe Show	83.47
	3	Foot Locker	82.23
	4	Famous Footwear	81.41
	5	DSW	80.95
Footwear Retailers (single-brand)	1	Dr. Martens	88.04
	2	Vans	87.14
	3	Nike	86.46
	4	Adidas	85.36
	5	Skechers	84.11
Jewelry	1	Brighton	88.77
	2	Kendra Scott	88.24
	3	Swarovski	88.18
	4	James Avery	88.06
	5	Pandora	86.51
Jewelry (high-end)	1	Cartier	91.64
	2	David Yurman	91.47
	3	Tiffany & Co.	90.85
Lingerie & Underwear	1	Soma	89.15
	2	Torrid	88.61
	3	Aerie	87.72
	4	Calvin Klein	87.39
	5	Victoria's Secret	85.59



<b>Luxury Fashion &amp; Accessories</b>	1	Tory Burch	93.75
	2	Louis Vuitton	88.67
	3	Kate Spade	87.96
	4	Michael Kors	87.24
	5	Sam Hober	86.45
<b>Outdoor Apparel</b>	1	Patagonia	90.97
	2	REI Co-op	90.46
	3	Lands' End	90.34
<b>Premium Apparel</b>	1	Brooks Brothers	91.51
	2	Giorgio Armani	90.81
	3	Tommy Bahama	88.58
<b>Purses/Bags</b>	1	Brighton	93.35
	2	Louis Vuitton	93.04
	3	Coach	90.24
<b>Second-Hand Clothing &amp; Products</b>	1	Amvets	84.79
	2	Clothes Mentor	83.65
	3	Once Upon A Child	82.73
	4	Uptown Cheapskate	81.24
	5	Buffalo Exchange	80.24

<b>Women's Apparel</b>	1	Altar'd State	92.68
	2	J.Jill	89.83
	3	Talbots	89.51
	4	Banana Republic	88.61
	5	Uniqlo	88.43

## FOOD, HEALTH & BEAUTY

<b>Chocolate &amp; Candy Stores</b>	1	Kilwins	93.07
	2	See's Candies	89.36
	3	Ghirardelli Chocolate Company	88.25
	4	Lindt	87.84
	5	Russell Stover	87.41

<b>Convenience Stores</b>	1	Wawa	87.69
	2	Sheetz	86.44
	3	QuikTrip	85.99
	4	Marathon	83.43
	5	Chevron	83.18

## METHODOLOGY

**The America's Best Customer Service 2024** rankings were identified from the results of an independent survey of more than 30,000 U.S. customers who have either made purchases, used services or gathered information about products or services in the past three years. Customers evaluated several brands: in total over 200,000 evaluations were collected. The awarded brands each received on average 100 evaluations from customers.

The survey was conducted on retailers and service providers from 166 categories, providing results for a broad spectrum of customer experiences in traditional retail, online and service segments. For each category, the most relevant brands were included in the scope of the survey according to reputation, turnover or market share.

In the brick-and-mortar categories, only retailers and service

providers present in at least two census regions have been included in the list. In the online categories, only retailers and service providers present mainly online have been included in the list. For retailers and service providers with an online presence and store networks, only the core business was considered. In total, the survey took an average of 9-12 minutes to complete, and the field period ran from June to July 2023.

### EVALUATION CRITERIA

The final assessment and rankings were based on the likelihood of recommendation (50 percent of the final score) and five weighted evaluation criteria (also 50 percent of the final score):

**1 QUALITY OF COMMUNICATION:** measures whether the contact (via e-mail, telephone or face-to-face) was friendly or polite.

**2 PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE:** measures the quality of information received and whether questions were answered correctly and in sufficient detail.

**3 RANGE OF SERVICES:** measures the variety of solutions available to fulfill one's personal expectations.

**4 CUSTOMER FOCUS:** measures whether the customer feels acknowledged and important.

**5 ACCESSIBILITY:** measures the availability of customer service in a shop or on a helpline.

The top 3-5 brands based on category size receiving the highest scores in each category were awarded as America's Best Customer Service 2024.

The rankings are comprised ex-

clusively of brands that are eligible regarding the scope described here. A mention in the ranking is a positive recognition based on survey recommendations and publicly available data sources at the time. The ranking is the result of an elaborate process which, due to the interval of data collection and analysis, reflects the last three calendar years. Furthermore, events following June 30, 2023, and/or pertaining to individual persons affiliated/associated with the brands were not included in the metrics. As such, the results of this ranking should not be used as the sole source of information for future deliberations. The information provided in this ranking should be considered in conjunction with other available information about the brands. The quality of brands that are not included in the rankings is not disputed.



<b>Discount Supermarkets</b>	1	Market Basket	86.94
	2	Grocery Outlet	83.63
	3	WinCo Foods	83.46
	4	Aldi	81.18
	5	Price Chopper	81.08
<b>Eyewear</b>	1	MyEyeDr.	88.02
	2	Warby Parker	86.53
	3	Kaiser Permanente	84.57
<b>Hearing Care</b>	1	Audibel	88.89
	2	Beltone	85.20
	3	Connect Hearing	84.03
	4	HearUSA	82.00
	5	Miracle-Ear	81.09
<b>Perfume &amp; Cosmetics</b>	1	Merle Norman Cosmetic Studio	92.88
	2	LUSH	91.34
	3	Bath and Body Works	90.78
	4	MAC	88.59
	5	Ulta Beauty	88.14

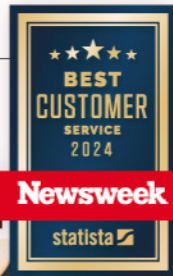
<b>Pharmacies &amp; Drugstores</b>	1	Genoa Healthcare	88.39
	2	Good Neighbor Pharmacy	87.09
	3	Health Mart Pharmacy	86.95
	4	Kaiser Permanente	85.61
	5	Giant Eagle Pharmacy	84.64
<b>Supermarkets</b>	1	Publix	92.91
	2	Wegmans	91.95
	3	Trader Joe's	91.15
	4	Fresh Thyme Farmers Market	90.13
	5	Harps Food Stores	87.82
<b>Superstores &amp; Warehouse Club Stores</b>	1	Costco	88.86
	2	Sam's Club	85.94
	3	BJ's	85.71

## HOME GOODS

<b>Arts &amp; Crafts</b>	1	HobbyTown	94.50
	2	Artist & Craftsman Supply	88.16
	3	Michaels	85.46
	4	Blick	85.40
	5	Hobby Lobby	85.27
<b>Auto Supplies</b>	1	AutoZone	85.44
	2	Advance Auto Parts	84.96
	3	O'Reilly Auto Parts	84.88
	4	Pep Boys	83.88
	5	NAPA AutoCare Center	83.42
<b>Bookstores</b>	1	Barnes & Noble	88.52
	2	Half Price Books	86.86
	3	Books-A-Million	86.66
<b>Camping &amp; Outdoor Gear (hunting, fishing)</b>	1	REI Co-op	92.33
	2	Bass Pro Shops	90.12
	3	Cabela's	89.74
	4	Academy Sports + Outdoors	87.11
	5	Sportsman's Warehouse	82.56







Newsweek

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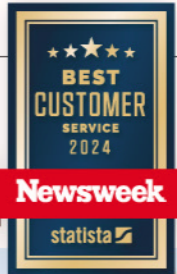
## Catering, Restaurants and Leisure



Bagel & Sandwich Chains	1	Which Wich	95.69
	2	Jason's Deli	88.67
	3	McAlister's Deli	87.41
	4	Potbelly Sandwich Shop	87.03
	5	Jersey Mike's Subs	87.00
Buffet Restaurants	1	Pizza Ranch	83.75
	2	Cicis	82.41
	3	Hoss's Steak and Sea House	82.32
	4	Golden Corral	79.06
	5	Western Sizzlin	77.78
Casual Dining Restaurant Chains	1	Ruby Tuesday	90.38
	2	LongHorn Steakhouse	89.11
	3	Cracker Barrel	89.04
	4	Carrabba's Italian Grill	89.01
	5	Texas Roadhouse	88.53
Coffeehouse Chains	1	Gloria Jean's Coffees	89.11
	2	Dutch Bros	88.52
	3	Human Bean	87.74
	4	Dunn Brothers Coffee	87.46
	5	Caribou Coffee	86.27

Discount Home Goods	1	Five Below	83.98
	2	Dollar Tree	79.70
	3	dd's Discounts	79.33
Furniture	1	Raymour & Flanigan	87.55
	2	Ikea	86.56
	3	La-Z-Boy	86.41
	4	Conn's HomePlus	84.10
	5	Havertys Furniture	83.09
Home Goods & Decor	1	World Market	86.46
	2	Pottery Barn	86.26
	3	Crate&Barrel	85.67
	4	HomeGoods	83.58
	5	At Home	81.80
Home Improvement Stores	1	True Value Hardware	91.22
	2	Menards	87.90
	3	Ace Hardware	86.64
	4	Lowe's	85.38
	5	Home Depot	85.38
Pet Care	1	Hollywood Feed	92.59
	2	Concord Pet	89.30
	3	Bentley's Pet Stuff	88.40
	4	Petland	88.26
	5	Pet Supplies Plus	87.30
Premium Furniture	1	Arhaus Furniture	89.89
	2	Bassett	89.79
	3	Ethan Allen	88.58
	4	Pottery Barn	87.43
	5	RH	87.43
Sporting Goods/ Equipment (team sports, golf, etc.)	1	Scheels	90.25
	2	PGA Superstore	89.17
	3	Play It Again Sports	88.23
	4	Academy Sports + Outdoors	87.10
	5	Champs Sports	86.44
Toys	1	LEGO	91.31
	2	Build-A-Bear Workshop	89.19
	3	Disney Store	84.87

GETTY (2)



## Online Retailers

CLOTHING		
Apparel (online)	1	Wrangler 90.49
	2	Hanes 88.48
	3	Lands' End 87.60
	4	ASOS 85.10
	5	Zulily 84.32
Baby & Children's Products (online)	1	The Gerber Store 88.63
	2	The Honest Company 88.62
	3	Carter's 88.47
	4	Burt's Bees Baby 87.94
	5	The Children's Place 86.21
Footwear (online)	1	HOKA 93.97
	2	Crocs 92.74
	3	Merrell 92.55
	4	Birkenstock 91.38
	5	Reebok 90.19

Doughnut Chains	1	Daylight Donuts	90.44
	2	Voodoo Doughnut	90.11
	3	Hurts Donut	89.67
	4	Top Pot Doughnuts	89.11
	5	LaMar's Donuts	89.03
Fast-Casual Restaurant Chains	1	Jersey Mike's Subs	89.53
	2	The Habit Burger Grill	89.05
	3	Qdoba	88.77
	4	McAlister's Deli	88.75
	5	Firehouse Subs	88.59
Fast-Food Restaurant Chains	1	In-N-Out Burger	93.10
	2	Chick-fil-A	92.76
	3	Culver's	91.90
	4	Five Guys	87.17
	5	Zaxby's	86.79
Ice Cream & Frozen Yogurt Stores	1	Kilwins	92.96
	2	Culver's	90.95
	3	Bruster's Real Ice Cream	89.30
	4	Ben & Jerry's	88.16
	5	Handel's Homemade Ice Cream	88.10
Movie Theaters	1	Alamo Drafthouse Cinema	93.30
	2	Malco Theatres	87.11
	3	Movie Tavern	86.32
	4	Cinemark	85.96
	5	B&B Theatres	85.81
Pizza Chains	1	Mellow Mushroom	93.03
	2	Donatos Pizza	90.98
	3	MOD Pizza	89.80
	4	Marco's	89.67
	5	Blaze Pizza	87.01
Upscale Chain Restaurants	1	Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steak House	93.97
	2	The Capital Grille	93.02
	3	Cooper's Hawk	91.86
	4	Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar	91.12
	5	Mastro's Restaurants	90.92





<b>Jewelers (online)</b>	1	James Avery	94.79
	2	Shane Co.	93.85
	3	Alex and Ani	93.07
	4	Kendra Scott	91.46
	5	Pandora	91.23
<b>Luxury Fashion &amp; Accessories (online)</b>	1	Tory Burch	93.39
	2	Fartech	92.38
	3	Kenneth Cole	90.97
	4	Mytheresa	90.40
	5	Bloomingdale's	89.66
<b>Members-Only Sales (online)</b>	1	RueLaLa	94.10
	2	Fabletics	84.77
	3	Beyond the Rack	82.05
<b>Men's Accessories (online)</b>	1	DelMonico Hatter	92.00
	2	Tieguys.com	90.58
	3	Bowtie.com	86.98
<b>Occupational Clothing (online)</b>	1	Carhartt	85.03
	2	Dockers	83.43
	3	Uniform City	81.83
	4	Dickies	81.65
	5	The Uniform Outlet	80.98
<b>Women's Apparel (online)</b>	1	Cider	92.06
	2	Avenue	90.44
	3	Fashion Nova	89.24
	4	Roaman's	88.84
	5	Blair	88.75

**FOOD, HEALTH & BEAUTY**

<b>Adult Beverages</b>	1	Total Wine & More	90.82
	2	BevMo!	89.53
	3	Wine.com	83.57
<b>Contact Lenses (online)</b>	1	1-800 Contacts	89.08
	2	Discount Contact Lenses	84.17
	3	Lens.com	83.53

<b>Eyewear Retailers (online)</b>	1	Zenni Optical	91.03
	2	eyeconic	90.91
	3	Warby Parker	87.30
	4	GlassesUSA.com	85.18
	5	EyeBuyDirect	85.10
<b>Groceries (online)</b>	1	FreshDirect	91.57
	2	Shipt	87.76
	3	AmazonFresh	85.57
<b>Meal Kit Services</b>	1	Dinnerly	83.66
	2	Home Chef	83.40
	3	HelloFresh	82.62
<b>Medical Supplies (online)</b>	1	Discount Medical Supplies	88.79
	2	Vitality Medical	87.88
	3	East Coast Medical Supply	87.12
<b>Perfume &amp; Cosmetics (online)</b>	1	Avon	94.98
	2	Lancôme	94.70
	3	Luxury Perfume	92.88
	4	Clinique	91.68
	5	Perfume.com	91.07
<b>Restaurant Delivery Services</b>	1	Postmates	82.40
	2	DoorDash	81.71
	3	Seamless	80.22
<b>Shopping TV Channels</b>	1	JTV	91.08
	2	QVC	89.23
	3	HSN	89.01
<b>Subscription Boxes (clothing &amp; other)</b>	1	BarkBox	92.86
	2	Stitch Fix	86.45
	3	Bespoke Post	85.05
<b>Subscription Boxes (makeup &amp; cosmetics)</b>	1	Birch Box	90.41
	2	Allure Beauty Box	88.25
	3	FabFitFun	87.43
	4	BoxyCharm	86.04
	5	Play! by Sephora	86.02
<b>Vegan and Vegetarian Products (online)</b>	1	Vegancuts	91.30
	2	Live Super Foods	91.10
	3	Purple Carrot	90.56



## HOME GOODS

<b>Booksellers (online)</b>	1	ThriftBooks	90.26
	2	Better World Books	87.21
	3	AbeBooks	85.84
<b>Consumer Electronics (online)</b>	1	Bose	95.27
	2	Dell	94.57
	3	Micro Center	93.48
	4	Apple	92.91
	5	Samsung	91.42
<b>Flower Retailers (online)</b>	1	Florists	87.98
	2	Teleflora	86.53
	3	1-800-Flowers.com	85.77
<b>Home Furnishings (online)</b>	1	Hayneedle	92.91
	2	Houzz.com	88.21
	3	Furniture.com	87.09
	4	Wayfair	86.00
	5	Furniture USA	84.17
<b>Lighting</b>	1	Shades of Light	88.54
	2	Circa Lighting	87.37
	3	Lamps Plus	86.40
<b>Office Supplies (online)</b>	1	Quill	86.28
	2	Staples	85.05
	3	Office Depot OfficeMax	83.80

<b>Online Home Stores</b>	1	Wayfair	86.87
	2	Ikea	86.22
	3	Overstock	86.14
<b>Second-Hand Products (online)</b>	1	Swap.com	92.22
	2	thredUP	85.99
	3	eBay	84.85

## SPORTS & LEISURE

<b>Bicycles (online)</b>	1	Glory Cycles	96.93
	2	City Grounds	94.01
	3	Colorado Cyclist	91.11
	4	Tree Fort Bikes	87.22
	5	Western Bike Works	86.99
<b>Costumes &amp; Accessories (online)</b>	1	Oriental Trading Company	86.93
	2	Party City	85.07
	3	Costume SuperCenter	83.60
<b>Electronic Cigarettes (online)</b>	1	Vapor Krew	94.14
	2	Electric Tobacconist	91.34
	3	MyVaporStore.com	88.14
	4	VaporBeast	87.91
	5	Direct Vapor	85.27
<b>Fishing Equipment &amp; Clothing (online)</b>	1	FishUSA	93.67
	2	Tackle Direct	92.85
	3	Orvis	90.42
	4	LandBigFish	85.75
	5	Fishing Tackle Unlimited	84.61
<b>Hobby Store, Model Making (online)</b>	1	Free Time Hobbies	88.55
	2	Hobby Lobby	88.12
	3	Horizon Hobby	84.22
	4	Mega Hobby	75.74
	5	Advantage Hobby	75.41
<b>Hunting Gear &amp; Equipment (online)</b>	1	MidwayUSA	87.66
	2	Browning	84.76
	3	Cheaper Than Dirt	84.70

FROM LEFT: SVETLANA CHERRY/GETTY; LIUDMILA CHERNETSKA/GETTY





<b>Musical Equipment (online)</b>	1	zZounds	<b>96.01</b>
	2	Sweetwater	<b>92.70</b>
	3	American Musical Supply	<b>85.19</b>
<b>Party Supplies (online)</b>	1	M&N Party Store	<b>86.49</b>
	2	Beau Coup	<b>85.70</b>
	3	Target	<b>84.44</b>
<b>Pet Food &amp; Pet-Related Products (online)</b>	1	Chewy	<b>91.76</b>
	2	PetCareRx	<b>90.78</b>
	3	1800Petsupplies.com	<b>89.63</b>
	4	1-800-PetMeds	<b>89.49</b>
	5	PETCO	<b>84.76</b>
<b>Photo &amp; Video Equipment (online)</b>	1	B&H	<b>94.36</b>
	2	Adorama	<b>92.22</b>
	3	Nikon	<b>89.95</b>
	4	Canon	<b>86.53</b>
	5	Panasonic	<b>86.35</b>
<b>Sports &amp; Fitness Nutrition (online)</b>	1	Vitacost	<b>93.86</b>
	2	Tiger Fitness	<b>92.62</b>
	3	AllStarHealth	<b>87.54</b>
	4	Fitness First USA	<b>86.97</b>
	5	Optimum Nutrition	<b>86.90</b>



## TRANSPORTATION

<b>Auto Parts Retailers (online)</b>	1	JEGS	<b>90.29</b>
	2	1A Auto	<b>88.31</b>
	3	RockAuto	<b>87.97</b>
	4	AutoAnything	<b>87.56</b>
	5	Summit Racing	<b>86.98</b>
<b>Automotive Marketplace (online)</b>	1	CarMax	<b>83.79</b>
	2	CarGurus	<b>83.64</b>
	3	Autotrader	<b>81.65</b>
<b>Motorcycle Parts &amp; Accessories (online)</b>	1	Rocky Mountain ATV	<b>92.33</b>
	2	J&P Cycles	<b>90.47</b>
	3	MotoSport	<b>89.78</b>
<b>Tire &amp; Wheel Manufacturers (online)</b>	1	Element Wheels	<b>88.47</b>
	2	Big O Tires	<b>88.08</b>
	3	RockAuto	<b>87.99</b>
	4	Discount Tire Direct	<b>86.22</b>
	5	Discounted Wheel Warehouse	<b>85.73</b>

## Online Services & Digital Products

<b>Book &amp; Photo Printing Services</b>	1	Snapfish	<b>91.56</b>
	2	KDP Print	<b>91.47</b>
	3	Shutterfly	<b>90.43</b>
<b>Business Printing Services</b>	1	Vistaprint	<b>89.04</b>
	2	Overnight Prints	<b>87.79</b>
	3	PrintingForLess	<b>87.40</b>
	4	GotPrint	<b>86.82</b>
	5	UPrinting	<b>84.93</b>
<b>Cloud Storage &amp; Cloud Computing Services</b>	1	iCloud	<b>86.03</b>
	2	Google Drive	<b>85.67</b>
	3	OneDrive	<b>79.52</b>

<b>Email Services</b>	1	iCloud	89.33
	2	ProtonMail	89.25
	3	Gmail	87.30
<b>Employment Search Engines</b>	1	Indeed	84.56
	2	LinkedIn	84.02
	3	Glassdoor	80.78
<b>Internet Service Providers</b>	1	T-Mobile	83.82
	2	AT&T	79.83
	3	Verizon	78.08
	4	Spectrum	76.93
	5	Frontier	76.35
<b>Language E-Learning Platforms</b>	1	Transparent Language	93.66
	2	e-LanguageSchool	90.67
	3	Mango Languages	89.17
	4	Language Pod 101	88.37
	5	Duolingo	85.85
<b>Mobile Carriers &amp; Telecommunications</b>	1	Metro by T-Mobile	85.63
	2	Consumer Cellular	83.71
	3	T-Mobile	82.06
	4	Spectrum	80.86
	5	Cricket Wireless	79.87
<b>Music Streaming Services</b>	1	Apple Music	87.24
	2	Spotify	87.17
	3	SiriusXM	87.05
	4	Tidal	86.66
	5	iHeartRadio	82.73

<b>Online Dating Sites &amp; Apps</b>	1	Zoosk	84.78
	2	InterracialMatch	81.31
	3	BlackPeopleMeet	81.10
	4	okCupid	76.78
	5	SpeedDate	76.30
<b>Price-Comparison Websites</b>	1	Google Shopping	86.13
	2	Shopzilla	85.89
	3	Honey	85.59
<b>Streaming Services (TV, video &amp; movies)</b>	1	Vimeo	89.49
	2	Disney+	89.26
	3	Amazon Prime	86.83
	4	Hulu	86.18
	5	Netflix	83.68
<b>Ticketing Services</b>	1	TicketCity	88.38
	2	Vivid Seats	85.79
	3	Ticket Liquidator	84.75
	4	Eventbrite	84.55
	5	Coast to Coast Tickets	84.46
<b>Wedding Registries</b>	1	MyRegistry.com	95.02
	2	Zola	88.85
	3	The Knot	87.68
	4	The Wedding Shop	85.54
	5	Target	84.24

## Services

### BEAUTY & WELLNESS

<b>Fitness Centers</b>	1	YMCA of the USA	88.47
	2	Life Time Athletic	88.11
	3	Orangetheory Fitness	86.62
	4	Workout Anytime	86.08
	5	Equinox	85.95
<b>Hair Salons</b>	1	Famous Hair	87.89
	2	Hair Cuttery	82.23
	3	Great Clips	81.50







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<b>Nutrition &amp; Weight-Loss Programs</b>	1	myfitnesspal	<b>88.08</b>
	2	WW (Weight Watchers Reimagined)	<b>84.80</b>
	3	GOLO	<b>84.58</b>
<b>Spas, Wellness &amp; Beauty</b>	1	The Woodhouse Day Spa	<b>89.86</b>
	2	Planet Beach	<b>88.29</b>
	3	Spavia	<b>87.71</b>
	4	Massage LuXe	<b>87.22</b>
	5	LaVida Massage	<b>85.56</b>

## EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION & CHILD CARE

<b>Child Care Services</b>	1	Children's Lighthouse Learning Centers	<b>87.99</b>
	2	Care.com	<b>80.39</b>
	3	The Goddard School	<b>77.06</b>
<b>Language Schools</b>	1	LAL Schools	<b>85.77</b>
	2	Berlitz	<b>84.86</b>
	3	The Language Company	<b>81.83</b>
<b>Nanny &amp; Au Pair Agencies</b>	1	The Nanny League	<b>88.77</b>
	2	Agent Au Pair	<b>86.32</b>
	3	GreatAuPair	<b>85.75</b>
<b>Temporary Employment Agencies</b>	1	Aerotek	<b>84.03</b>
	2	Randstad	<b>79.94</b>
	3	Adecco	<b>79.36</b>
<b>Tutoring Services</b>	1	The Tutors Directory	<b>92.13</b>
	2	The Tutoring Center	<b>92.07</b>
	3	Kaplan International	<b>90.60</b>
	4	Elite Home Tutoring	<b>90.55</b>
	5	Kumon	<b>84.18</b>

## INSURANCE

<b>AD&amp;D Insurance (accidental death and dismemberment insurance)</b>	1	AIG	<b>94.51</b>
	2	New York Life Insurance Company	<b>93.53</b>
	3	American Family	<b>93.28</b>
	4	Sun Life Financial	<b>90.60</b>
	5	Farmers	<b>87.65</b>

<b>Auto Insurance</b>	1	Hanover	<b>92.67</b>
	2	USAA	<b>91.01</b>
	3	American Family	<b>86.21</b>
	4	The Hartford	<b>85.97</b>
	5	State Farm	<b>85.29</b>
<b>Disability Insurance</b>	1	Unum	<b>96.30</b>
	2	Guardian	<b>91.75</b>
	3	State Farm	<b>88.59</b>
<b>General Liability Insurance</b>	1	The Hartford	<b>91.34</b>
	2	American Family	<b>87.60</b>
	3	Nationwide	<b>86.59</b>
	4	USAA	<b>86.21</b>
	5	Travelers	<b>85.67</b>
<b>Health Insurance</b>	1	Molina Healthcare	<b>89.88</b>
	2	Priority Health	<b>85.07</b>
	3	Florida Blue	<b>83.62</b>
	4	Humana	<b>83.24</b>
	5	Kaiser Permanente	<b>82.60</b>
<b>Homeowners Insurance</b>	1	USAA	<b>93.18</b>
	2	Erie Insurance	<b>91.88</b>
	3	American Family	<b>90.23</b>
	4	Hanover	<b>88.61</b>
	5	State Farm	<b>85.17</b>



Life Insurance	1	Protective Life	91.89
	2	Erie Insurance	88.68
	3	New York Life Insurance Company	88.58
	4	Transamerica	87.79
	5	MetLife	86.57
Retirement Planning Solutions	1	Edward Jones	95.07
	2	MetLife	94.77
	3	John Hancock	93.13
	4	Fidelity Investments	89.38
	5	Vanguard	88.93
Supplemental Insurance	1	Anthem	91.60
	2	Cigna	90.33
	3	Aflac	88.17
	4	Kaiser Permanente	87.85
	5	Humana	87.38
Travel Insurance	1	HTH Travel Insurance	93.54
	2	Allianz Global Assistance	89.42
	3	Berkshire Hathaway Travel Insurance	85.83
	4	TripAssure	85.79
	5	AXA Assistance USA	85.56

PERSONAL SERVICES & HOME CARE

Automotive Repair	1	NAPA AutoCare Center	89.39
	2	Firestone Complete Auto Care	85.26
	3	Pep Boys	84.92
	4	O'Reilly Auto Parts	83.29
	5	Midas	82.60
Car Washes	1	Tommy's Express	91.81
	2	Mister Car Wash	87.21
	3	Zips Car Wash	86.93
	4	Quick Quack Car Wash	83.28
	5	Raceway Express Car Wash	82.17

Dry-Cleaning Services	1	Lapels	92.38
	2	Dryclean USA	88.08
	3	Tide Dry Cleaners	87.66
	4	Zips Dry Cleaners	87.26
	5	Martinizing Dry Cleaning	86.68
Handyman Referral Services & Home Repairs	1	Handy	84.87
	2	Mr. Handyman	78.68
	3	Thumbtack	75.22
Home Security	1	SimpliSafe	89.75
	2	Vector Security	89.68
	3	Brinks Home Security	86.79
	4	Vivint	85.49
	5	ADT	84.33
Home-Care Services For Seniors & Disabled	1	Home Instead	94.52
	2	ComForCare	92.83
	3	FirstLight Home Care	86.73
	4	Home Helpers	86.63
	5	Home Care Assistance	84.16





#### House Cleaning & Maid Services

1	The Maids	94.14
2	Better Life Maids	92.93
3	The Cleaning Authority	87.13
4	Comet Cleaners	86.26
5	Hallmark Homecare	85.81

#### Storage Centers

1	SmartStop Self Storage	84.35
2	CubeSmart	82.94
3	Go Store It	81.88
4	SecurCare Self Storage	79.67
5	Life Storage	78.98

### REAL ESTATE & BANKING

#### Asset Management

1	Edward Jones	93.48
2	Ameriprise	92.87
3	BlackRock	91.94
4	Vanguard	89.32
5	Fidelity Investments	89.27

#### Commercial Banks

1	Regions Bank	90.65
2	U.S. Bank	89.26
3	Fifth Third Bank	89.14
4	JPMorgan Chase & Co.	88.47
5	Huntington Bancshares	87.17

#### Crowdfunding Platforms

1	MicroVentures	85.50
2	Wefunder	82.78
3	Kickstarter	82.21
4	GoFundMe	80.76
5	Patreon	79.16

#### Online Banking

1	TD Bank	92.61
2	Citibank	90.34
3	U.S. Bank	89.75
4	Chime	89.02
5	Truist Financial	88.92

#### Payment Services

1	Visa	94.74
2	Apple Pay	92.69
3	American Express	89.80
4	Amazon Pay	89.68
5	Google Pay	87.31

#### Real Estate Agencies

1	Weichert	88.77
2	ERA	88.59
3	ZipRealty	85.54
4	Realty One Group	84.52
5	Better Homes & Gardens Real Estate	84.31

#### Real Estate Database

1	RE/MAX	84.50
2	Realtor.com	84.37
3	Trulia	84.35
4	Zillow	82.39
5	Homefinder.com	81.77

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<b>Trading &amp; Brokerage Services</b>	1	Edward Jones	91.37
	2	Vanguard	91.28
	3	T. Rowe Price	90.98
	4	Morgan Stanley	88.61
	5	TD Ameritrade	88.22

## TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

<b>Airlines</b>	1	Southwest Airlines	87.24
	2	JetBlue	86.02
	3	Delta	84.92
	4	Alaska Airlines	83.30
	5	American Airlines	81.89

<b>Amusement Park Experience</b>	1	Dollywood	95.46
	2	SeaWorld Parks	91.58
	3	Disney Parks & Resorts	91.21
	4	Universal Parks & Resorts	91.19
	5	Busch Gardens Theme Parks	88.66

<b>Apartment Hotels, Extended Stays</b>	1	Staybridge Suites	94.75
	2	Home2 by Hilton	91.28
	3	HomeTowne Studios by RedRoof	91.16
	4	Residence Inn by Marriott	86.37
	5	Homewood Suites by Hilton	84.10

<b>Budget Hotels (1 to 2 stars)</b>	1	Candlewood Suites	94.13
	2	Holiday Inn Express	84.40
	3	Sleep Inn	81.57
	4	La Quinta Inn & Suites	77.31
	5	Quality Inn	77.11

<b>Bus Carriers</b>	1	Megabus	82.04
	2	Amtrak Thruway	81.96
	3	Greyhound	74.03

<b>Car Rental</b>	1	Alamo	85.00
	2	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	84.63
	3	Ace Rent-A-Car	82.60
	4	Avis	81.94
	5	Hertz	80.89

<b>Carsharing</b>	1	Enterprise CarShare	93.92
	2	Turo	93.55
	3	Car2go	88.00

<b>Cruise Operators</b>	1	Viking Cruises	95.45
	2	Disney Cruise Line	90.32
	3	Royal Caribbean International	87.97
	4	Holland America Line	87.89
	5	Celebrity Cruises	87.52

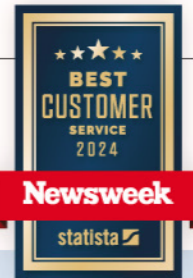
<b>Economy Hotels (3 stars)</b>	1	Drury Hotels	91.58
	2	Courtyard by Marriott	88.77
	3	Fairfield Inn	87.61
	4	Hampton by Hilton	87.33
	5	Hilton Garden Inn	86.03

<b>E-mobility</b>	1	Lime	97.43
	2	Veo	94.87
	3	Bicycle Transit Systems	94.84

<b>Flights, Hotels and Holiday Deals Search Engines</b>	1	TripAdvisor	87.67
	2	Hotels.com	86.36
	3	Booking.com	85.29
	4	Expedia	83.62
	5	trivago	83.59







<b>Gas Stations</b>	1	Love's	87.05
	2	QuikTrip	85.60
	3	Sheetz	85.35
	4	Chevron	84.39
	5	Exxon	82.26
<b>Low-Cost Airlines</b>	1	Southwest Airlines	85.87
	2	Avelo	84.96
	3	Sun Country Airlines	84.22
<b>Luxury Hotels (5 stars)</b>	1	Mandarin Oriental	98.68
	2	Waldorf Astoria	96.16
	3	Park Hyatt	95.99
	4	W Hotels	95.49
	5	The Ritz-Carlton	94.10
<b>Moving Services</b>	1	Penske Truck Rental	87.12
	2	PODS	84.48
	3	U-Haul	83.37
	4	TWO MEN AND A TRUCK	76.96
	5	Empire Moving Group	76.37
<b>Music Festivals</b>	1	Electric Forest	95.42
	2	Essence Festival	89.52
	3	Hangout Music Fest	87.82
	4	Lollapalooza	87.00
	5	Coachella Valley Music Festival	84.71
<b>Premium Hotels (4 stars)</b>	1	Westin	91.02
	2	Marriott	90.52
	3	Hyatt	89.66
	4	Hilton	89.31
	5	Sheraton	88.62
<b>Ridesharing, Taxi</b>	1	Via	96.65
	2	Lyft	86.55
	3	Uber	84.14
<b>Shipping &amp; Delivery Services</b>	1	DHL	95.27
	2	LaserShip	90.92
	3	UPS	86.72

<b>Spa Resort &amp; Retreats</b>	1	The Spa at Spruce Point Inn	91.21
	2	Mauna Kea Spa	89.79
	3	Spa Desert Springs at JW Marriott Desert Springs Resort & Spa	88.96
	4	The Spa at Hotel Park City	86.48
	5	LakeHouse Spa at Lake Austin Spa Resort	85.19
<b>Travel Agencies</b>	1	Liberty Travel	96.71
	2	Overseas Adventure Travel	88.67
	3	Gate 1 Travel	86.71
	4	Vacations To Go	86.68
	5	Allure Travel	85.37
<b>Travel Management</b>	1	FCM Travel Solutions	95.27
	2	World Travel	94.10
	3	BCD Travel	90.07
	4	Allure Travel	86.86
	5	Liberty Travel	84.18
<b>Vacation Rentals</b>	1	HomeTogo	87.38
	2	Vacasa	87.23
	3	Vrbo	85.75
	4	Airbnb	85.56
	5	Booking.com	85.03



MY TURN

## 'Black History is American History'

Morgan Freeman on his new documentary about the first Black tank unit to serve in combat in World War II and the gaps in our national memory





**“Affirmative action has changed the shape of and the landscape of higher education.”** ▶ P.55



**UNTOLD STORIES**  
Left: Morgan Freeman's HISTORY Channel documentary is *761st Tank Battalion: The Original Black Panthers*. Above: A Sherman tank and crew of the 761st in Germany circa March 1945.

**▶** EARLY IN MY TEENAGE YEARS, WHEN MOVIES and books were pretty much my life, it began to occur to me that what was missing from these experiences was depictions of me as a person. When Sidney Poitier came along, I began to feel better about movies. However, there was nothing historical that challenged the status quo.

When I was called to talk about acting in the 1989 movie *Glory*, I almost blew my top. It showed the country in a state of civil war, fighting against itself and ultimately needing every able-bodied man, hence forming companies like the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, one of the Union Army's first Black regiments of the conflict.

I was so excited about the idea of doing this kind of story, and after we had done it—filmed it and shown it—I had people tell me that they wept, literally wept, because they never knew anything like this had occurred in American history.

I was proud to be involved in that; it was like a spur, a juice. There's more. There's so much more history people do not know about. So let's keep going. I thought: if you get any way to do it, do it. Go ahead. That can be your aim in life, to expose as much of American history that involves me as possible.

by

**MORGAN FREEMAN**

### **Sent Into Battle**

Often with projects you're passionate about, you fight for it for however long you fight for it and if it doesn't get legs, you shelve it. But sooner or later its time will come. Some spark, some incident, something will happen that brings that project to life.

And that's what happened with the 761st Tank Battalion project, a documentary telling the story of the first Black tank unit to serve in combat during World War II.

We had the idea some years ago and introduced it to one of our most successful producer-directors, Steven Spielberg. He saw the need for this story to be told, but his situation changed before we got anything going.

The project was shelved, but we never forgot it. And I don't know how it came to life, but it had a

COURTESY OF THE HISTORY CHANNEL; WILLIAM VANDIVER/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY; TOP RIGHT: JESSICA RINALDI/THE BOSTON GLOBE/GETTY



## Culture

**LEGACY** Freeman with Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin (far right) and military service members.

lot to do with director Phil Bertelsen, and producers James Younger and Lori McCreary, who saw that this story could be told as a documentary instead of a movie.

It outlines the entirety of the 761st: their training, how long they trained, why they trained so much, why they were called up and what happened to them after they got to France.

A sort of b\*\*\*\*\* battalion, always attached to some infantry unit, when they arrived in France they were sent into battle, and they succeeded. They kept succeeding, and because of these successes were kept at the front for 183 straight days.

Despite their various achievements, it took three decades for this unit to receive the special commendation awarded to them. Personally, I want to stand on a platform and start yelling and screaming about neglecting Black history. Black history is American history. What my job is now is correcting a few things that were left out.

### Missing in Action

As a child, my own uncles, Jessie and Willie, were called up to serve in the Second World War.

While I didn't have any real concept of what was happening, I knew there was a war going on. I was living in Mississippi and later Chicago. We had blackout areas, where you pulled all your shades down and dimmed the coal oil lamps.

When I was about 6 and a half, I remember hearing that one of my uncles had been declared missing in action in the Pacific. They couldn't say he'd been killed because they couldn't find a body.

**“Personally, I want to stand on a platform and start yelling and screaming about neglecting Black history.”**

For many years I had searched for records relating to both of my uncles, to no avail. But in his extraordinary research, Phil discovered that Willie not only had not been stationed in the Pacific—he was in France—but also was not killed in combat. He was murdered. That's the next big mystery that our production team is trying to solve.


For me, those records were an eye-opener, a realization of what really happened. I was 6 years old when they disappeared, and the last time I saw them both was when my grandmother, on my father's side, died and they came to the funeral. They were both in uniform. From

then on it was all just hearsay.

I don't know how to express how I feel about the discoveries I have made, but it's gratifying to get the truth and know who, what, where and why.

Had battalions such as the 761st received the recognition they deserved at the time, I do believe the social landscape of the United States would have been affected.

Many people think Black people have never done anything of any note, of any seriousness. But that is simply gaps in history.

This is us. This is all of us. This is who we are. This is American history. 

► **Morgan Freeman** is an Oscar-winning actor. 761ST TANK BATTALION: THE ORIGINAL BLACK PANTHERS *premiered on August 20 on The HISTORY Channel and will premier on Sky HISTORY on October 1.*

*All views expressed in this article are the author's own. As told to NEWSWEEK's My Turn associate editor **Monica Greep**.*





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97%



\* Results from self-evaluation tests on 40 women after 28 days.

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# Japan leads the way in healthcare innovation

With the oldest and fastest-aging population in the world, Japan's healthcare system is facing unprecedented challenges. However, with the help of Japanese ingenuity and innovation, the nation's medical companies are taking on this challenge by designing better products, diagnostic solutions and treatments. These companies are also putting themselves at the forefront of global healthcare challenges in both developed nations (many of which also face the aging population issue) and developing regions.

A company advancing nuclear medicine, ATOX has worked with Japan's National Institutes for Quantum Science and Technology (QST) on the development of Vrian, a positron emission tomography (PET) scanner that improves the accuracy of brain imaging and can be used to diagnose dementia. "The focus on the brain stems from the development of specialized PET cameras that significantly reduce costs," explains ATOX president Toshikazu Yaguchi. "Standard PET scanners cost more than 300 million yen, so to make them practical for use in the field, we aimed to provide a more specialized and cost-effective solution through ATOX technology. We were offered this project eight years ago, and after seven years of continuous development, medical device approval was granted in 2021 and the product was launched last year in 2022."

ASKA Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd, meanwhile, focuses on three areas: obstetrics, gynecology

and urology. The company aims to tackle many women's healthcare issues, including menstrual pain and thyroid disorders. "In the field of obstetrics and gynecology, as of the second half of FY2022, we hold the number one sales position in the Japanese market. We aim to not only provide pharmaceuticals but also medical equipment and related services, offering comprehensive health services for females," says president Sohta Yamaguchi, who also highlights that ASKA is actively engaged in R&D in the field of thyroid disorder drugs that minimize the side effects of existing medication, or drugs that treat thyroid disease with a different approach.

Medical device manufacturer Japan Lifeline focuses on diagnostics and treatment, specializing in the arrhythmias, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal fields. With cardiovascular diseases on the rise, the company aims to expand use of its products globally, reveals president Keisuke Suzuki. "It is true that the cardiovascular field will expand given the globally aging population. We provide products to Japan, Korea and Taiwan, but we want to expand to the U.S., Latin America, Southeast Asia and other places in the world. With our history in the cardiovascular field, we want to utilize catheters and other devices to expand into new fields such as gastrointestinal and neurovascular also."

The aging population in Japan and other countries has also led to increased demand

for adult diapers. Manufacturer of disposable hygiene product manufacturing systems, Zuiko aims to meet this increasing demand while also addressing another major issue with its diaper recycling machine that turns waste into biomass. "Diapers, of course, contribute to human health and wellness. However, the issue of diaper waste and its impact on the environment is a big problem globally," highlights Toyoshi Umebayashi, president of Zuiko. "When the waste is burned or put into a landfill, it produces CO2 or methane gas. We want to convert as much of this waste as possible into an energy source for sustainable development purposes and that's why we developed this machine."

Zuiko aims to leverage its manufacturing capabilities to expand into the medical sector, as is the case for Nittoseiko Analytech, which specializes in high-precision analytical instruments for a range of industries. "The strength of our company is its philosophy of contributing to the growth and enrichment of society and the protection of the environment through our analytical and measuring devices and technologies," says president Motokuni Ishimaru. "Over the next 10 years, we will be focusing on new fields like pharmaceuticals, medicine and the environment. In order to do so, we have put forth active efforts to provide highly functional, high-quality and best-fitting analytical and measurement devices."

## Shining a light on cancer care: Solasia Pharma's dedication to providing quality pharmaceuticals

From Sancuso to Darvias - a journey of developing high-quality pharmaceuticals for cancer patients.



"As our company name suggests, our mission is to continue to be the sun that illuminates the future of people facing cancer."

Yoshihiro Arai, President,  
Solasia Pharma K.K.

Few products are as closely tied to the well-being of patients as the pharmaceuticals targeting cancer.

One of the companies driving innovation in drugs that manage the symptoms and adverse reactions of oncological medicines and chemotherapies is Japan's Solasia.

Since launching its first product, Sancuso, in 2018, the company has continued to develop medicines that improve its patient's lives.

The latest pipeline in Solasia's product list is SP-04, which is designed to prevent chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy (CIPN). SP-04 mimics one of the enzymes responsible for reducing ROS in the body, a new mode of action not found in existing medicines. If approved, SP-04 would be the first drug to prevent CIPN, and company president Yoshihiro Arai reveals that Solasia is "in the process of evaluation of the compound in the animal model of CIPN caused by the target chemotherapy".

The company is also conducting joint research and develop-

ment of nucleic acid medicine for the treatment of peritoneal dissemination with the GeneCare Research Institute, a Japanese biotechnology firm.

This joint development will target the RECQL1-siRNA, which is believed to have a novel mechanism of action to induce cell death by selectively suppressing the expression of the DNA repair enzyme helicase RECQL1, which is found to be overexpressed in cancer cells.

In multiple pharmacological studies, the product has been shown to suppress the growth of various types of cancer and prolong survival in animal models of peritoneal dissemination associated with advanced-stage ovarian or gastric cancer.

Solasia's marketed drug Darvias has shown great potential

for the treatment of peripheral T-cell lymphoma and the Named Patient Program process has been started in Europe, India and China, with South America to follow shortly.

The potential of Darvias' unique targeting of the mitochondria in the cell makes it particularly attractive, and Mr. Arai says Solasia is always on the lookout and exploring licensing opportunities to collaborate with potential partners, especially in the Asian markets.

From Sancuso to Darvias - Solasia continues its journey of developing high-quality pharmaceuticals for cancer patients.



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<https://solasia.co.jp/en>



# ASKA Pharmaceutical looking to be the number one total healthcare company

With drugs for obstetrics, gynecology, and urology, ASKA is making sure that all of its patients' health needs are met.



"We create new value as a leading women's healthcare company."

**Sohta Yamaguchi**,  
President,  
ASKA Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.

First established in 1920, ASKA Pharmaceutical has grown to become the leading company in female healthcare in Japan, and currently occupies the number one sales position domestically in the fields of obstetrics and gynecology.

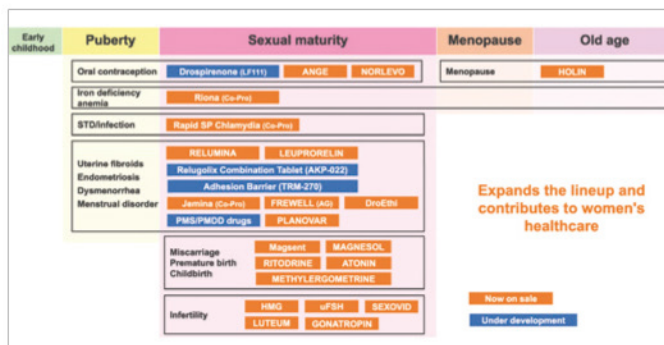
That status owes much to the group's ability to adapt, and as recently as 2021 the firm changed its management style to a holdings structure, enabling it to provide a holistic service from prevention, examination and diagnosis to treatment and post-treatment. "ASKA Pharmaceutical Holdings Co., Ltd. has several group companies," company president Sohta Yamaguchi explains, "and one of them focuses on pharma-



Head office in Tokyo

ceutical drugs, while another focuses on testing and equipment for early diagnosis and prevention. With this comprehensive approach, we can increase our business opportunities."

One of the group's core businesses is the production of oral contraceptives (OCs), which, in contrast to condoms, allow women



Obstetrics and gynecology products by life stage

to assert their preference for non-pregnancy.

But as well as producing OCs, ASKA Pharmaceutical is also actively working on developing drugs



Drugs for the treatment of thyroid disease when launched in 1922

to minimize their side effects.

Mr. Yamaguchi again: "We are currently in phase three of developing LF111, which utilizes only progesterone, thus eliminating the side effects associated with estrogen."

Treatment of dysmenorrhea is another core focus. To this end, ASKA has recently launched its DroEthi combination tablets, which, according to Mr. Yamaguchi, provide a "generic alternative to a well-established product already on the market."

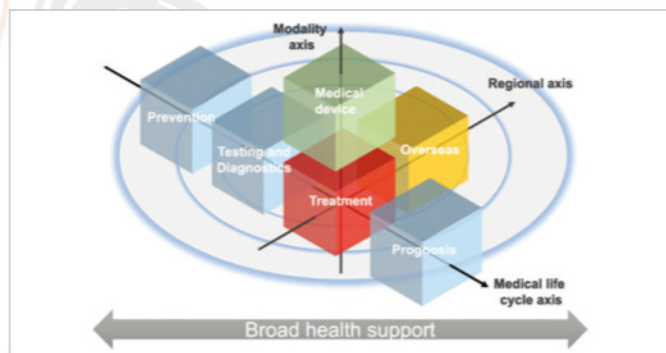
While initial feedback has been good, it is only one in a range of products the company offers in this particular field. "One of our strengths," Mr. Yamaguchi explains, "is that we provide a number of products for dysmenorrhea treatment, a field in which we hold around a 50% market share."

And indeed, having long conducted R&D both in-house and with other companies, ASKA is now actively

seeking new collaborations overseas, particularly in the fields of internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, and urology.

A two-pronged strategy will see the company introduce unique drugs developed by overseas companies to the Japanese market as well as offering licensing partnerships to overseas companies for drugs it has developed itself.

A Relugolix combination tablet called AKP-022, for instance, is



Total healthcare company with a strong foundation as a specialty pharma company

set to go to clinical trials in July 2023. Focusing on uterine fibroids in females, the product is being positioned as the successor to RELUMINA, and is expected to enable longer durations of administration, and therefore improve patient convenience.

In 2021, meanwhile, the company invested in a partnership with Ha Tay Pharmaceutical Joint Stock Com-

pany in Vietnam, hoping to take advantage of the country's growing economy and medical market. Through this partnership, ASKA is aiming to establish a strong presence in Vietnam and expand into other Asian countries from there.

Looking to the future, ASKA has set itself a number of goals to achieve in the mid-term. "We want to remain the leader in the field of obstetrics and gynecology, both in name and in reality," says the ASKA Pharmaceutical president.

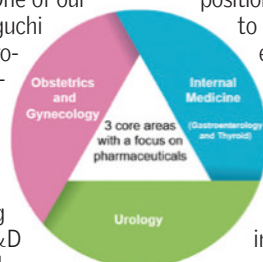
"We contribute to the stable supply of essential drugs and the elimination of unmet needs. For example, in the thyroid disease area, where we already have a market share of more than 90%, we are working on various initiatives. As well as ensuring that thyroid patients have access to a reliable pharmaceutical supply, we are aiming to develop drugs that minimize the side effects of existing drugs, or drugs that

treat thyroid disease with a different approach," Mr. Yamaguchi explains. "Through this we will respond to medical needs that have previously not been met."

Through its provision of drugs and treatments as well as medical equipment and related services, the ultimate aim, Mr. Yamaguchi states, is "to become a total healthcare company and a global company, offering comprehensive health services for females."

**ASKA Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.**

[www.aska-pharma.co.jp](http://www.aska-pharma.co.jp)



Three core areas with a focus on pharmaceuticals

# From hygiene products to global impact: unveiling Zuiko's vision for the future

**Zuiko is dedicated to developing ideas and devices that contribute to society, as well as to environmental initiatives like diaper recycling.**

Founded in 1963, Zuiko Corporation boasts six decades of experience when it comes to the design, development, manufacture and maintenance of disposable hygiene product manufacturing systems.

And while, in recent years, there has been a perceived decline in the country's manufacturing sector, brought on, in part, by the pace of change in modern-day technology, Toyoshi Umebayashi, Zuiko Corporation president, Toyoshi Umebayashi, is adamant that Japan retains its expertise in incremental innovation and is highly skilled at combining different elements to create something unique.

The country's much-vaunted customer-centric approach, meanwhile, ensures that companies such as Zuiko, whose corporate philosophy is to contribute to the healthcare industry and to the health and wellbeing of people all around the world, can respond to new social needs as and when they arise.

Domestically, an aging population, for example, means that, allied to well-documented issues surrounding labor shortages, there is also a growing market for adult diapers. The challenge for Zuiko in this context, according to Mr. Umebayashi, will be to "evaluate our current technologies and manufacturing processes to find the most valuable and essential ones to compete in the global market."

New technologies help also, with the company having developed new elastic material processing technology that allows for rubber bonding without using adhesives. Zuiko's commitment to creating a more sustainable and carbon-neutral society, meanwhile, which has found expression in the SFD-600 diaper recycling machine, gives it a clear edge over competitors.

"The issue of diaper waste and its impact on the environ-

"Zuiko's mission is to continue to evolve in the VUCA era, and to help spread world-class technology and inspirational machines around the world."

Toyoshi Umebayashi,  
President, ZUIKO Corporation



ment is a big problem globally," Mr. Umebayashi explains, "accounting for approximately 8% of household waste in Japan and around 10% in Europe."

"While diapers contribute to human health and wellness," he continues, "they also create waste. When the waste is burned or put into a landfill, it produces CO<sub>2</sub> or methane gas."

Zuiko's response? To provide the SFD-600, which turns disposable diaper waste into material for biomass energy. Already in use in Japan, the machine could soon be trialed in a number of European countries as part of the company's diverse program of global expansion.

Expanding into a foreign country is, of course, fraught

with difficulty. The key to any such venture, according to Mr. Umebayashi, is for companies to avoid bringing their entire infrastructure to the local market but instead concentrate on creating a production base locally. That, and communication. "Communication," Mr. Umebayashi affirms, "is essential in finding the best partner, and I don't mind traveling to remote or distant countries to achieve this. No matter how many trips it takes, I am willing to go there to meet with key individuals and find the right partner."

With eight bases worldwide already, Mr. Umebayashi, whose motto is "local production for local consumption", has designs on establishing a production

base in Europe, as well as continuing to expand Zuiko's baby diaper and feminine care product machines.

"We are aiming to enter African countries quickly," he states, "but we need to find the right country to begin our expansion. That's our priority. We're also targeting India, which is a rapidly growing market."

Having started life producing sanitary napkin manufacturing machines, Zuiko has since expanded its technology into different areas such as diaper manufacturing machines, feminine hygiene products, and diaper recycling technology and machinery.

In terms of the future, there are clear plans to expand not only into new countries but into new sectors as well.

Mr. Umebayashi adds: "Our next target is the medical field, where there is room for improvement in efficiency, particularly where manual processes are still used. We can take advantage of our technology in the medical field, especially where we can achieve cost savings. Many medical devices are now made in Southeast Asian countries and exported to other countries mainly because of the cost efficiency. However, if it's cost-effective, we prefer to manufacture in the U.S. or Europe."

Looking to the next five years, Mr. Umebayashi is keen that the decline in Japanese manufacturing should be reversed. "Over the last two decades, one of our biggest failures as a country has been the lack of accumulation and tracking of data. We didn't keep track of data, or we lost it. Technology is essential but the accumulation of data is just as important, and I think it's something that Japan needs to catch up on in the years to come."



## Brain-dedicated PET that achieves space savings but high resolution

**Vrain** Vision+Brain

The world's first Helmet-type PET with high resolution



## Advancing innovation: ATOX's cross-sector endeavors in medicine and infrastructure

How ATOX leverages its radioactive expertise to shape the future of nuclear medicine and bridge maintenance.



"We have over 1,700 employees now, and I think it's really through their dedication and commitment to this field that we've been able to expand while also achieving the recognition we have."

**Toshikazu Yaguchi**,  
President, Atox Co., Ltd.

With the advent and development of the nuclear age in Japan, ATOX entered into various business areas such as radiation control, decontamination, and maintenance, and now operates at all nuclear power plants in Japan.

After the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, the business environment in the nuclear industry changed dramatically, and ATOX entered the medical business by utilizing the radiation technology it had cultivated.

In the field of nuclear medicine, ATOX developed the world's first helmet-type positron emission tomography (PET) system, "Vrain", in collaboration with the National Institutes for Quantum Science

and Technology. In addition to improving the accuracy of tests for brain tumors and epilepsy, Vrain will be useful for cognitive diagnosis, and will enable imaging of abnormal proteins and the progress of their accumulation in Alzheimer's disease, in which the accumulation of a protein called amyloid- $\beta$  is believed to be involved in disease progression.

"Vrain is characterized by its small size and high performance in the form of a helmet, which en-

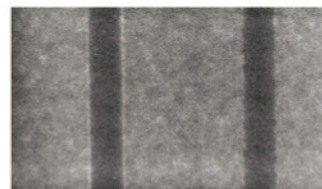
ables cost reduction compared to conventional devices, as well as high quality brain imaging and space saving. We hope to contribute to the development of testing systems as Alzheimer's disease drugs are approved," says president Mr. Toshikazu Yaguchi.

Meanwhile, ATOX has become the Japanese distributor of Belgian firm IRE ELiT's  $^{68}\text{Ge}/^{68}\text{Ga}$  generator for PET imaging. The company has supplied this leading-edge technology to Hokkaido University, as part of a joint effort to develop a revolutionary new way to detect prostate cancer.

"The traditional method of diagnosis in Japan involves taking samples directly from 20 to 30 different parts of the prostate, which can be painful," Mr. Yaguchi explains. "However, the introduction of imaging using a generator handled by ATOX reduces the need for direct sample collection and eases patient suffering."

Beyond medicine, ATOX is collaborating with Tokyo University on developing state-of-the-art bridge-maintenance technology.

The non-destructive inspection technique conventionally used for bridge maintenance and management is ultrasonic measurement. However, this method makes it difficult to visualize concrete thicker than 300mm. "To address this issue, ATOX developed an inspection system with a portable X-ray generator and a high-performance detector to visualize incomplete grout filling and PC steel fractures," Mr. Yaguchi reveals.



Visualization of concrete structure by Linear Accelerator

"We expect that this system will be well suited for the maintenance of other structures, including older structures, and we look forward to making a broad contribution to the field of social infrastructure maintenance."



$^{68}\text{Ge}/^{68}\text{Ga}$  generator



[www.atox.co.jp](http://www.atox.co.jp)

# Analytical and measuring instruments of unmatched quality

Nittoseiko Analytech's equipment is at the front lines of the fight against global warming, air and water pollution, and more.

For 50 years, Nittoseiko Analytech (formerly Mitsubishi Chemical Analytech) has excelled in the field of analytical instruments. The Japanese company's highly reliable and technologically-advanced equipment is used in a wide variety of industries, from energy and mineral resources to electronic materials, pharmaceuticals and food, and exported to 50 countries worldwide.

Nittoseiko Analytech's products fall under three product groups: titrators and moisture meters, which have over 50 years of history; elemental analyzers that comply with many official methods and have a wide range of analytical applications and lineups; and resistivity meters that are indispensable for evaluating the physical properties of electronic materials. Now, as part of the Nittoseiko Group, which acquired and renamed the company in 2020, Nittoseiko Analytech aims to expand globally with a focus on helping clients reduce their environmental impact.

"We started in 1973 as the analytical equipment division of the Mitsubishi Chemical Industry. In 1995, the company was spun off to become Dia Instruments. In 2008, the company name was changed to Mitsubishi Chemical Analytech. It became a subsidiary of Nittoseiko in 2020, and we started anew as Nittoseiko Analytech," says president Motokuni Ishimaru.

Thanks to the strengths, technology and know-how Nittoseiko Analytech has built up over the years, the Japanese enterprise can deliver high-quality products based on each customer's needs, providing a comprehensive service that includes



"Over the years, we have responded to the diverse needs of our customers with our unique advanced technology, and wide variety of analytical and measuring instruments."

**Motokuni Ishimaru,**  
President,  
Nittoseiko Analytech Co., Ltd.

consultation and after-sales services.

"We strictly produce our products based on international standards. Along with providing high-quality and precise devices, we also give measurement procedures and schedule the measuring process. By doing so, we can supply products that represent both the 'Made in Japan' and Nittoseiko Analytech brands," adds Mr. Ishimaru.

"Our operation or management vision is to continue achieving innovations to remain a trustworthy company and contribute to the happiness of our customers and employees. In order to elevate customer satisfaction, we provide a comprehensive service network domestically and overseas."

Parent company Nittoseiko Co., Ltd. specializes in fastening technology and screws, but was originally a fluid meter manufacturer. As such, the motivation behind its acquisition of Mitsubishi Chemical Analytech was the chance to reestablish its presence in the analytical and measurement sector. "At the same time, we have a substantial international network, connecting



Low Resistivity Meter  
Loresta GXII

channel for them to go global," explains the president.

As for the synergistic impact, Nittoseiko is not only strong in fastening systems but also in mechanical machinery, robotics and automation technologies. "With Japan's aging population and low birth rate, automation will be key in reducing labor requirements. Since Nittoseiko has extensive technology on automation, we are discussing how we can combine our measurement technology with their mechanical technology or industrial machinery so that we can upgrade our measurement systems," says Mr. Ishimaru. "We are conferring with Nittoseiko about the use of our newly-established European base in Germany as the channel for its products to expand into Europe. By doing so, we can similarly fortify our German base."

While Nittoseiko Analytech already holds a dominant share domestically in the fossil fuel and petrochemical market, moving forward the company aims to expand its presence in the fields of pharmaceutical & medical and lithium-ion batteries. "These days, we have been receiving a lot of inquiries domestically and globally in the field of lithium-ion batteries. With the decarbonization of society, there will be new alternative energy sources. We currently have a dominant share in the measurement for gasoline which has stable demand

and includes jet fuel, SAF, synthetic energy, recycled oil and fuel cells. We want to be ready to cater to each new emerging market," the president explains, stressing that the company's main focus is to provide analytical and measurement instruments to contribute to its customers' efforts in reducing their environmental burden.

"Our products are not big devices, and we are concentrating on supplying precise and high-quality devices, so our customers can become active in achieving environmentally-sound activities. One of the mainstream levels of support that we provide for our clients to reduce the environmental burden is in the field of lithium-ion batteries. We supply instruments that can measure the raw material or powder. Major global battery makers are introducing our products. Therefore, we are supporting their activities."



Automatic Powder Resistivity  
Analyzer MCP-PD600 for Li-ion  
battery market

In response to the issue of Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS), around which there has been tightening environmental regulation in the U.S., E.U. and other regions, Nittoseiko Analytech highlights its AQF-2100H analytical equipment. Utilizing IC (ion chromatography) with AQF-2100H (combustion IC) is an ideal solution to screen PFAS in all sorts of products or waste and yet another example of Nittoseiko Analytech's commitment to tackling pressing global environmental concerns.



AQF-2100H for combustion IC  
for PFAS screening

50 countries where we already have sales channels. Nittoseiko had a long-term vision of expanding overseas, and our company served as a significant

**Nittoseiko  
Analytech**

[www.n-analytech.co.jp](http://www.n-analytech.co.jp)



## NEWSMAKERS

## Talking Points

## People

**"THEY ARE  
STILL HOLDING  
HANDS."**

—Josh Carter, grandson of  
former President Jimmy  
Carter and Rosalynn Carter

THE  
**GREG HILL**  
SHOW

**"She's tough, man. She  
just stood out there  
and played through it."**

—NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS COACH  
BILL BELICHICK ON SEEING TAYLOR  
SWIFT PERFORM IN A DOWNPOUR



BILL BELICHICK



**"For the people  
of Hawaii, we're  
with you for as  
long as it takes, I  
promise you."**

—PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

**ESPN**

**"It's super  
important  
winning  
this trophy  
because of the  
young people  
that can see  
they can be  
pro football  
players  
right now."**

—SPANISH MIDFIELDER AITANA  
BONMATÍ ON THE WORLD CUP



AITANA BONMATÍ

**The New York Times**

**"PEOPLE LIKE ME ARE  
AT THE FOREFRONT  
OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS."**

—Vic Barrett, a plaintiff in a climate  
change lawsuit against the federal  
government



VIC BARRETT

**The Washington Post**

**"This is a point in  
time for this mission  
to shine again."**

—NASA scientist Lika Guhathakurta on  
solar probe STEREO-A heading toward Earth  
17 years after launch

**n p r**

**"AFFIRMATIVE ACTION  
HAS CHANGED THE SHAPE  
OF AND THE LANDSCAPE  
OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN  
A WAY THAT WE NEED TO  
CONTINUE."**

—Former Harvard University  
President Drew Gilpin Faust



## PARTING SHOT

# Nia Vardalos

WHEN *MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING* OPENED IN 2002, IT MADE ITS STAR and writer, Nia Vardalos, a celebrity overnight. “I’m somebody ordinary that something extraordinary happened to.” Now, after the 2016 sequel, Vardalos is bringing the Portokalos family back with *My Big Fat Greek Wedding 3* (September 8). Part of what has kept us coming back to the family is that “we are real people who could be your family. And I think our kookiness and our flawed, not perfect-ness is reflected in our audience’s hearts.” And now, with Vardalos taking on the role of star, director, writer and producer, she’s decided the family must go to Greece, which was made possible through Greek tax credits and Faliro House Productions, who made it “their determination to get me what I wanted, which was all of Greece shoved into one movie.” And all of that happened because of Vardalos’ commitment to and love of her heritage. “Those were the pluses of having Greek heritage, being fluent in Greek making movies about Greece, we were given a lot of goodwill.”



**“It was an extraordinary experience to get the wish fulfilled to film in Greece.”**

## What inspired you to do a third installment now?

I believe you have to live life to write life. And I had not lived enough to write that sequel [then]. I needed to be a mom. By the time the second movie began to germinate in my head, it was because I was a mom. The theme of the second movie is we turn into our parents. But the theme of the third movie is we become the parents of our family.

## Where do we find the family now?

I pick it up a year later [after the sequel]. I wanted to remind the audience what they felt for these characters and also that we have lost our beloved Michael Constantine. I did not want to treat [that] lightly. It’s the reason why we’re going on our trip, because our dad asked us to go.

## What makes John Corbett such a fantastic leading man?

He is casual and easygoing. Every delivery of his seems like he just thought of that line at that very moment. He’s a writer’s dream. As an actor, he’s a co-star’s dream because he is very present in the scene.

## You have multiple roles on this film. Why was that important to you?

Watching from the sidelines on the first, and in the second film watching the characters become who they are, I realized that if I was going to possibly complete the trilogy, I felt that it would be doing myself a disservice to not be brave and step forward and direct. —H. Alan Scott

► **Note:** This conversation took place before the Screen Actors Guild strike was announced ► Visit [Newsweek.com](http://Newsweek.com) for the full interview.



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