

Asia's 50 Power Businesswomen 2016

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At a time of global economic angst, [Asia's 50 Power Businesswomen](#) list gets a shake up, with 27 newcomers and several well-known names dropping off.

The candidates selected for this list – which is presented alphabetically and is not intended to be a ranking – are active in the upper echelons of business in Asia, wield significant power and financial resources, and have outshone their peers over the past year.

Despite China's slowdown, a core group of this year's winners is creating wealth in the country's manufacturing sector, including Ma Xiuhui, who started a company churning out traditional light bulbs and now illuminates homes around the world with her Opple LED lighting, and [Mou Jinxiang](#), whose Lianhe Chemical sells specialty chemicals to giants such as [Dow Chemical DOW -2.09%](#) and [BASF](#).

Roughly a quarter of the new candidates are in technology: Jane Yan founded Venustech, an Internet security company that claims 80% of China's government and military [business](#), while Eva Chen is back in the rankings as her Japan-based Trend Micro tackles security for the Internet-of-Things.

Lucy Peng, with two multibillion-dollar companies under her belt, solidifies her position as one of tech's most powerful executives. After cofounding e-commerce giant Alibaba she set up its online financial services arm Ant, which is reportedly targeting a swoon-inducing \$50 billion valuation in its latest financing round. That would make it one of the most valuable private companies ever.

Retail in many Asian countries is led by women, including Chadatip Chutrakul of Siam Piwat in Thailand, and Sky Park of South Korea's E-Land, to name but two. In New Zealand, pioneering businesswoman Wendy Pye's educational publishing powerhouse underpins her goal of making sure all children learn to read.

Familiar names that have dropped off include China's Zhang Xin, whose Soho property company continues to see revenue and profit dive, and Pansy Ho of MGM China and Shun Tak Holdings, as a downturn in the Asian gaming mecca wallops both her companies (although her father's fourth wife, Angela

Leong, managing director at casino company SJM, makes her first appearance on the list, thanks to her savvy property investments).

The list acknowledges the inroads women are making in the business world, but gender inequality persists. Grant Thornton's Women in Business report, released in March, says the global proportion of senior business roles held by women stands at 24%, while a third of businesses have no women in senior management. The Philippines has one of the highest proportions of women in senior jobs, 39%, while Japan is among the lowest, 7%.

Women are best positioned to know what it will take to get more of them into commanding roles in the workforce and keep them there. ICICI Bank's Chanda Kochhar, a five-time listee, drills down on this issue: Her bank pays for its executives to take their young children with them on business trips, and parents also have the option of working from home for a year.

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