7 CEOs Who’ve Made Over $200 Million Since 2006

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Despite a devastating financial crisis that left the stock market reeling, these seven CEOs managed to rake in at least $200 million from 2006 to 2010, according to calculations in Forbes’s annual report on CEO compensation.

Five of the seven highly compensated chief executives run companies with a stock price that is significantly higher today than it was five years ago.

And in one case, the stock has multiplied fivefold. That’s good news for investors--and for CEOs whose compensation includes a hefty pile of stock options.

These corporate chieftains are sitting at the top end of the pay spectrum in a country where income inequality has been on the rise for a couple of decades. USA Today reported last month that median CEO pay in 2010 rose 27 percent, while workers overall got just a 2.1 percent bump. Between 1989 and 2007, the bottom 90 percent of households accounted for just 16 percent of income growth; the top 1 percent took 56 percent of it, according to the Center for American Progress.

Overall, the financial crisis may have had a positive effect on CEO compensation. “Short-term incentive has been de-accentuated over the last year or two, and long-term incentive has been restored,” says James Reda, managing director of the executive compensation firm James F. Reda & Associates. When CEOs are incentivized over the long-term, they tend to make decisions that are good for the enduring strength of their company rather than ones that boost stock prices – and compensation -- in the short term, according to a 2010 paper by Harvard Law Professor and corporate governance expert Lucian A. Bebchuk.