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# Nasdaq

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## What is Nasdaq

[Nasdaq](#) is a global electronic marketplace for buying and selling securities, as well as the benchmark index for U.S. technology stocks. Nasdaq was created by the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD) to enable investors to trade securities on a computerized, speedy and transparent system, and commenced operations on February 8, 1971. The term “Nasdaq” is also used to refer to the Nasdaq Composite, an index of more than 3,000 stocks listed on the [Nasdaq exchange](#) that includes the world’s foremost technology and biotech giants such as Apple, Google, Microsoft, Oracle, Amazon, Intel and Amgen.

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## NASDAQ

### BREAKING DOWN Nasdaq

[Nasdaq](#) officially separated from the NASD and began to operate as a national securities exchange in 2006. In 2007, it combined with the Scandinavian exchange group OMX to become the Nasdaq OMX group, which is the largest exchange company globally, powering 1 in 10 of the world's securities transactions. Headquartered in New York, Nasdaq OMX operates 26 markets – primarily equities, and also including options, fixed income, derivatives and commodities – as well as three clearinghouses and five central securities depositories in the U.S. and Europe. Its cutting-edge trading technology is used by 70 exchanges in 50 countries. It is listed on the Nasdaq under the symbol NDAQ and has been part of the S&P 500 since 2008.

The Nasdaq computerized trading system was initially devised as an alternative to the inefficient “specialist” system, which had been the prevalent model for almost a century. The rapid evolution of technology has made the Nasdaq's electronic trading model the standard for markets worldwide.

As a leader in trading technology from the outset, it was only fitting that the world's technology giants chose to list on the Nasdaq in their early days. As the technology sector grew in prominence in the 1980s and 1990s, the Nasdaq became the most widely followed proxy for this sector. The technology and dot-com boom and bust of the late 1990s is exemplified by the rise and fall of the Nasdaq Composite during this period. The index