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Gain of Function

*“They’re not [just] bad people—
They’re criminals.”*

Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, on people who refuse to take his company’s Covid vaccine

NATION: **PFIZERIA**

FOUNDED: 1849, Charles Pfizer

CAPITAL: New York City, NY

GDP: \$81.5 billion revenues (2021 est.)

EXPORTS: Drug and vaccine dependency

Milestones in Our Company’s Growth:

It’s hard to imagine today that our global company was founded in Brooklyn way back in 1849 by two German immigrant cousins, Charles Pfizer and Charles Erhart, funded by a \$2,500 loan from Pfizer’s father.

With the breakup of competitor Johnson & Johnson into separate pharmaceutical and consumer products divisions in late 2021, Pfizer is now the largest pharmaceutical company in the world by revenues.

To celebrate, let’s take a trip back in time and look at a few of the key moments of growth in Pfizer’s long and glorious history.

1849: Pfizer’s first product combines the dissimilar skills of Pfizer, a chemist, and Erhart, a confectioner. An antiparasitic called *santonin*, the bitter drug is combined with a sweet almond-toffee confection and shaped like a candy cone to make it more palatable.

1940s: Pfizer is soon branching out into the manufacture of food processing products, notably *citric acid*, used in soft drinks like Coca-Cola. During the 1940s, the company becomes the world’s leading manufacturer of *vitamins*, and with the onset of World War II, Pfizer becomes the first drug company to mass produce *penicillin*.

1996: Regrettably, over 50 children die in Nigeria after the company tests an experimental antibiotic on children without obtaining proper regulatory approval or consent from the children’s parents.

30 Nigerian families sue the company, accusing Pfizer of using their children as ‘human guinea pigs.’ As designed, this experiment takes place in Africa—not in Europe or the United States—so in 2007, the company’s lawyers are able to negotiate an out-of-court settlement of just \$75 million with the victims’ families.

2000s: The company begins relying more on mergers and acquisitions than R&D to expand its product line, embarking on a series of major deals beginning in 2001.

Today, Pfizer produces a broad range of products—from *Advil* to *Zoloft*—among them household names like *Chapstick*, *Preparation H*, *Lipitor*, *Xanax*, and that perennial consumer favorite, *Viagra*.

Of course, Pfizer’s rapid expansion doesn’t come without a few adverse side effects. The company inherits numerous legal disputes from its mergers, including a class action lawsuit over **Warner-Lambert’s** *Rezulin* diabetes drug, a major fine for *PCB* dumping by **Pharmacia**, and thousands of lawsuits against **Wyeth’s** *diet drugs*.

2003: Pfizer’s merger with Pharmacia makes some ‘ethical investing’ enthusiasts a bit nauseous: Pharmacia had acquired the drug division of environmental pariah **Monsanto** just three years earlier.

2009: The company encounters another minor hindrance in its growth plans, with a federal investigation of the company for illegal marketing. Sparked by a disgruntled former Pfizer sales representative’s whistleblowing complaint (“The whole culture of Pfizer is driven by sales...if you didn’t sell drugs illegally, you were not seen as a team player”) Pfizer pays a record \$2.3 billion to settle the case—over thirty times what the Nigerian settlement cost.

Despite the setback, Pfizer has paid only about \$4 billion in total civil and criminal penalties since the year 2000, a sum equal to less than a month of its current revenues.

Over the previous five decades, Pfizer has weathered convictions for false advertising, illegal marketing, price fixing, wholesale bribing of doctors, falsified safety trials, corporate espionage, toxic waste dumping, conspiracy, and fraud and racketeering.

Fines for many offenses have been levied repeatedly, but Pfizer simply writes off such penalties as a routine cost of doing business.

2016: Pfizer is forced to scrap a fourth major M&A deal: a planned \$160 billion merger with Irish-based **Allergan**, after the U.S. government blocks the company from avoiding paying U.S. taxes by moving its global headquarters to Ireland.

2018-2020: Pfizer’s annual revenues remain flat at about \$40 billion—primarily due to patent monopolies on many of its most ~~price-gouging~~ profitable products expiring.

2021: In a remarkable example of brilliant strategic planning, Pfizer’s annual revenues skyrocket in the wake of the global Covid ~~plandemie~~ pandemic. Despite receiving billions of dollars in public R&D funding, Pfizer and other vaccine makers are able to overcharge customers as much as 24 times their production cost, a \$41 billion windfall.

2022: Propelled by an unprecedented global mass vaccination effort—spearheaded by ~~Pfizer lobbyist~~ U.S. Chief Medical Advisor Anthony Fauci and fuelled by ~~media hysteria~~ medical precaution—Pfizer’s vaccine revenues alone are expected to swell to \$54 billion, accounting for half of total profits. As a further shot in the arm to the company’s bottom line, CEO Albert Bourla says it has the capacity to produce as many as *four billion* doses of booster vaccine annually.

If the company can continue employing ~~patent monopolies~~ fair reimbursement for its R&D costs, ~~strong-arm tactics and secret government contracts~~ persuasive negotiation, Pfizer’s vaccines will remain on track to become the top selling products in pharmaceutical industry history. ■