

JD.com founder Richard Liu leaves CEO post

April 7 2022, by Zen Soo



Liu Qiangdong, also known as Richard Liu, CEO of JD.com, raises his arms to celebrate the IPO for his company at the Nasdaq MarketSite, in New York on May 22, 2014. Chinese e-commerce company JD.com said Thursday, April 7, 2022, that its founder Richard Liu has left his position as CEO, the latest Chinese billionaire tech company founder to step aside amid increased government scrutiny of the country's technology industry. Credit: AP Photo/Mark Lennihan, File

Chinese e-commerce company JD.com said Thursday that its founder Richard Liu has left his position as CEO, the latest Chinese billionaire founder to step aside amid increased government scrutiny of the country's technology industry.

Liu will hand over the reins to JD.com's president Xu Lei, according to a [company](#) statement. Liu will remain as the chairman of the board and continue to focus on JD.com's "long-term strategies, mentoring younger management, and contributing to the revitalization of rural areas," the statement said.

"I'll devote more of my time to JD's long-term strategies and future drivers as we continue to work on the most challenging yet valuable things," Liu said.

Liu is the latest in a string of Chinese technology company founders who have stepped down from leadership positions in recent years. Last year, e-commerce firm Pinduoduo's founder Colin Huang resigned as chairman and Bytedance founder Zhang Yiming also left his position as chairman of the firm.

The departures came as Beijing cracked down on the country's once-freewheeling [technology industry](#) over antitrust concerns and fears that China's technology giants were wielding too much influence over society.

JD.com's [stock price](#) has plunged 27% over the past year. Its New York-listed stock closed down 3% to \$59.07 on the Nasdaq ahead of the announcement Thursday.

Like many Chinese [technology](#) companies, JD.com's finances have suffered over the past year. The company reported a [net loss](#) of 5.2 billion yuan (\$817 million) for the [fourth quarter](#) of 2021, compared to a

net income of 24.3 billion yuan (\$3.8 billion) in the previous year, even as revenue grew 23%.

E-commerce firms like JD.com and rival Alibaba have been suffering from economic headwinds and a slowdown in consumption, as well as increased competition from other players such as short-video companies like Kuaishou that have begun incorporating e-commerce functions into their platforms.

In 2018, Liu was arrested in Minnesota in the U.S. after a Chinese university student accused him of raping her in her apartment after they both attended a dinner party. Liu was exonerated after prosecutors found there was not enough evidence to press charges. The student later sued Liu in a [civil lawsuit](#), seeking more than \$50,000 in damages.

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