

Index	Close	Day (%)	Week (%)	MTD (%)	YTD (%)
S&P/ASX 200	5580.4	3.11	-3.72	-11.98	-11.98
ASX 200 Property	1806.6	6.78	-0.56	-14.43	-14.43
S&P 500 Comp	1352.1	1.01	-1.54	-7.92	-7.92
NASDAQ	2360.9	1.92	-1.41	-10.99	-10.99
Nikkei 225	13092.8	2.06	-5.01	-14.47	-14.47
Euro Stoxx 50	3809.1	6.46	-6.31	-13.43	-13.43
MSCI Wld \$US	3194.5	0.30	-4.82	-11.89	-11.89
EPRA Glob REIT	3080.33	5.19	2.42	-7.75	-7.75
Oil (WTI) \$US bl	90.06	2.76	-0.86	-6.19	-6.19
Commodities US\$	7236.42	2.32	-1.05	-3.08	-3.08
AUD/USD	0.8829	1.20	0.68	0.54	0.54

Australian shares extended their rebound to a second day, as hopes that US bond insurers would be bailed out helped restore confidence in banks, and bargain hunters looked for cheap deals. The S&P/ASX 200 index climbed 168.1 or 3.1% to 5580.4 at the close in Sydney.

The financial sector rose 4.4%. The major banks led the market higher, with National Australia Bank lifting 4.1% to A\$33.75, Commonwealth Bank gaining 1.8% to A\$50.75, ANZ increasing 3.2% to A\$26.02 and Westpac adding 1.5% to 25.6. Investment banks also gained ground. Macquarie Group rose 8.6% to A\$64.03 and Babcock & Brown soared 21% to A\$19.5. Allco Finance Group, a manager of assets including ships and aircraft, added 29% to A\$2.86. The company said margin lenders forced the sale of shares on Wednesday, when it tumbled 26%. Centro Properties Group rose as much as 39% to a high of A\$0.495. It ended at A\$0.48.

Top global miner BHP Billiton rose 2.7% to A\$34.82 while takeover target and rival Rio Tinto added 2.3% to A\$108.47. Zinifex, the world's third largest zinc mining company, surged 11% to A\$9.88, its biggest gain in two months. Zinifex said second quarter output of the metal from its two Australian mines gained 2.9%.

US equities staged their biggest two day rally since November after some companies reported profit that topped analysts' estimates and lawmakers gave the go ahead for the proposed government stimulus package that would distribute rebate checks to 117 million families and give businesses incentives to invest in equipment. The S&P 500 climbed 13.47 or 1% to 1352.07, the Dow Jones Industrial Average added 108.44 or 0.9% to 12378.61 and the Nasdaq Composite advanced 44.51 or 1.9% to 2360.92.

Xerox climbed the most in two years after the world's largest maker of colour printers increased revenue by introducing new products. Lockheed Martin, the biggest defence company, posted its steepest advance since 2003 on higher sales of computer services to the government.

Energy companies in the S&P 500 climbed 3.2% as a group, the steepest advance among 10 industries. Technology companies increased 3% and producers of raw materials rallied 2.9% for the second and third biggest gains. Freeport McMoRan Copper & Gold and Alcoa led increases among commodities producers after China's economy reported a fourth straight quarter of growth above 11%.

The US Labor Department reported an unexpected drop in first time claims for unemployment benefits, easing concern that the fallout from the collapse of the sub-prime mortgage market will drag the US into recession.

European stocks gained the most since 2003 as talks to bail out bond insurers, rising profits at Nokia and China's economic growth boosted expectations that equity markets will weather a slowdown in the US. The Dow Jones Stoxx 600 index surged 5.2% to 322.08, while the Euro Stoxx 50, a measure for the euro region, lifted 6.5%.

UBS and insurer Axa jumped more than 8%. Nokia surged 15% as profit beat analysts' estimates.

However, Societe Generale fell after reporting a 4.9 billion euro trading loss and accusing a trader of fraud.

