ZACKS | Our Research. Your Success.

Sep 03, 2020

Agilent Technologies (A)

$103.42 (As of 09/02/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **$109.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months	**Zacks Recommendation:** (Since: 07/16/19) Prior Recommendation: Outperform	**Neutral**
Short Term: 1-3 Months	**Zacks Rank:** (1-5)	**3-Hold**
	Zacks Style Scores:	VGM:C
	Value: D | Growth: C | Momentum: A	

Summary

Agilent reported fiscal third-quarter results wherein both earnings and revenues surpassed the consensus mark. Growth in pharmaceutical market on the back of solid momentum across both small and large molecule applications remained positive. Further, strong performance in the food market was a tailwind. Furthermore, growth in LSAG segment contributed well. Notably, the acquisition of BioTek Instruments remains a growth driver. Moreover, the company's focus on aligning investments toward more attractive growth avenues and innovative high-margin product launches is a positive. The stock has outperformed its industry on a year-to-date basis. However, COVID-19 induced disruptions and currency headwinds remain overhangs. Softness in diagnostics and clinical, sluggish chemical and energy, and weak environmental and forensics businesses are concerns.

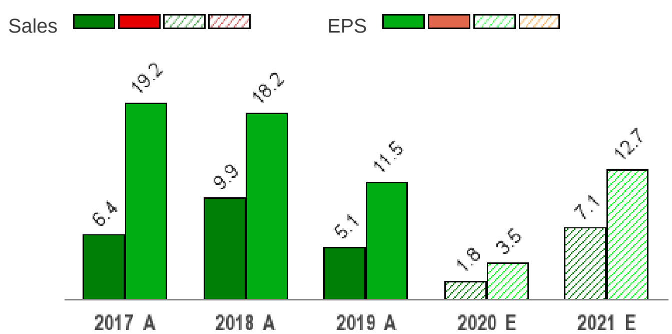
Price, Consensus & Surprise

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	**$103.66 - $61.63**
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	**1,304,725**
Market Cap	**$31.9 B**
Year-To-Date Price Change	**21.2%**
Beta	**1.06**
Dividend / Dividend Yield	**$0.72 / 0.7%**
Industry	**Electronics - Testing Equipment**
Zacks Industry Rank	**Bottom 23% (193 out of 251)**
Last EPS Surprise	**18.2%**
Last Sales Surprise	**3.9%**
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	**3.4%**
Expected Report Date	**11/23/2020**
Earnings ESP	**0.0%**
P/E TTM	**32.4**
P/E F1	**32.1**
PEG F1	**2.7**
P/S TTM	**6.1**

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Sales Estimates (millions of $)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	1,398 E	1,340 E	1,385 E	1,492 E	5,633 E
2020	1,357 A	1,238 A	1,261 A	1,402 E	5,258 E
2019	1,284 A	1,238 A	1,274 A	1,367 A	5,163 A

EPS Estimates

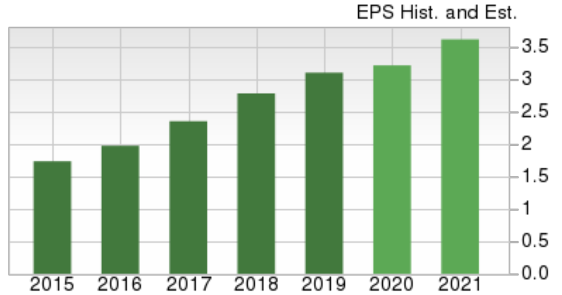
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	$0.88 E	$0.82 E	$0.86 E	$0.97 E	$3.63 E
2020	$0.81 A	$0.71 A	$0.78 A	$0.91 E	$3.22 E
2019	$0.76 A	$0.71 A	$0.76 A	$0.89 A	$3.11 A

*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and Sales estimates, is as of 09/02/2020. The reports text is as of 09/03/2020.

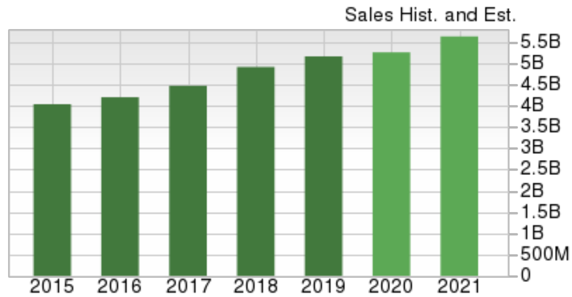
Overview

Palo Alto, CA-based Agilent Technologies, Inc. was originally a spin-off from Hewlett-Packard. The company is an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) of a broad-based portfolio of test and measurement products serving multiple end markets.



On Nov 1, 2014, Agilent completed the spinoff of its electronic measurement segment into a new company named Keysight Technologies, making it an independent, publicly traded company.

Over the last three years, the company has diversified into new end markets, namely industrial, chemical and electronics markets. The company has three business segments, including Life Sciences & Applied Markets Group (LSAG), Diagnostics and Genomics Group (DGG) and Agilent Cross Lab Group (ACG).



The company uses a direct sales model for the distribution of its products, which is supplemented by distributors, resellers, manufacturers' representatives, telesales and electronic commerce, as necessary.

Agilent reported revenues of $5.16 billion in fiscal 2019, up 5% from fiscal 2018. The company generated 71% of revenues from markets outside the United States. Almost 20% were derived from China, including Hong Kong.

LSAG accounted for 45% of fiscal 2019 revenues (up 1% from fiscal 2018), DGG contributed 20% (which increased 8% from fiscal 2018) and ACG represented the remaining 35% (improving 8% from fiscal 2018).

Most of the competition for these three segments comes from Bruker Corp., Danaher Corp, Affymetrix, GE Healthcare, Life Technologies Corp., Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waters Corp., Illumina, Inc., Life Technologies Corp., Abbott Laboratories, Sakura, Roche, Perkin Elmer Corp., Shimadzu Corp, Heidenhain Corp., Malvern Instruments, Seiko Instruments, Veeco Instruments and Zygo Corp.

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Buy:

The improving healthcare environment, acquisitions and leading position in key emerging markets will help Agilent generate solid revenues.

- Agilent's focus on innovation is a key catalyst. The company has consistently introduced new and improved products that have enabled it to secure customer loyalty and capture additional market share. Generally, the launch of new platforms and acceptance of new standards indicate significant testing opportunity and Agilent's leadership position ensures top-line growth. The spending level appears sufficient for maintaining its technology lead and enabling the company to develop products for the life sciences, operational surveillance and nano technology areas.

- Agilent has been supplementing organizational growth with strategic acquisitions. The recent buyout of BioTek Instruments will likely expand the company's presence in the life science research space. This will further strengthen Agilent's offerings related to live cell analysis, as these product lines aid in quantification of biomolecules, biomolecular interactions and cellular structure. In addition, the buyouts of Multiplicom NV, Cobalt Light Systems, Seahorse Bioscience and iLab Solutions have expanded its product portfolio.

- Agilent has entered into a number of strategic partnerships. The company has collaborated with many companied to expand in the healthcare market. Currently, the healthcare sector is undergoing a revolution and companion diagnostics or personalized medicine is taking the center stage as it could improve patient care and better manage health care costs by administering the most appropriate treatment to individuals. Agilent has signed several other collaborative agreements with the likes of Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Merck & Co., and Eli Lilly on companion diagnostics for the treatment of cancer and other diseases and Cell Signaling Technology to develop antibodies in the growing field of companion diagnostics.

Reasons To Sell:

Economic downturn due to coronavirus outbreak is a headwind in the near term. New regulations in China and a leveraged balance sheet are major concerns for Agilent.

- Lingering macroeconomic concerns are affecting the spending environment, which other test equipment providers, such as Teradyne and Advantest are also seeing. This may impact Agilent, as it remains one of the largest providers of spectrum analyzers, network analyzers, signal sources and oscilloscopes into these markets. Moreover, economic downturn due to coronavirus outbreak is a major concern in the near term.

- Agilent holds a strong position in China and this region represents Agilent's second-largest customer market. New regulations in China are a concern for Agilent. The recent reorganization of multiple food agencies into NMSA (National Market Supervision Administration) by the Chinese government could be a pain for Agilent as it might continue to impact its sales in the near to medium term. Moreover, the ongoing trade dispute between the United States and China could continue to impact the company.

- Agilent's balance sheet remains leveraged. As of Jul 31, 2020, the company's net debt amounted to $940 million, compared with $1.18 billion as of Apr 30, 2020. Although declining det debt balance is positive, the presence of short-term debt is negative. Moreover, total debt-to-total capital was 31.8% as of Jul 31, 2020, up from with 27.3% as of Apr 30, 2020.

Last Earnings Report

Agilent's Q3 Earnings Beat Estimates, Revenues Down Y/Y

Quarter Ending	07/2020
Report Date	Aug 18, 2020
Sales Surprise	3.90%
EPS Surprise	18.18%
Quarterly EPS	0.78
Annual EPS (TTM)	3.19

Agilent Technologies reported third-quarter fiscal 2020 earnings of 78 cents per share, beating the Zacks Consensus Estimate by 18.2%. Further, the bottom line improved 2.6% year over year and 9.9% sequentially.

Revenues of $1.26 billion were down 1% on a reported basis and 3.1% on a core basis. This was owing to COVID-19 induced disruptions, currency headwinds, softness in diagnostics and clinical, sluggish chemical and energy, weak academic and government, and environmental and forensics business.

Nevertheless, the top line surpassed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $1.21 billion and increased1.9% from the previous quarter.

Growth in pharmaceutical market on the back of solid momentum across both small and large molecule applications remained positive. Further, strong performance in the food market was a tailwind.

We note that region wise Americas, Asia-Pacific and Europe accounted for 36%, 39% and 25% of revenues, respectively, in the reported quarter.

By type, 58% of revenues were generated from Consumer Services Informatics. Instruments contributed the remaining 42% of revenues.

In terms of major markets, Analytical Laboratory generated 86% of fiscal third-quarter revenues. Dx & Clinical accounted for the remaining 14%.

Segment Top-line Details

Agilent has three reporting segments — Life Sciences & Applied Markets Group (LSAG), Agilent Cross Lab Group (ACG) and Diagnostics and Genomics Group (DGG).

In the reported quarter, LSAG was the largest contributor to total revenues. The segment accounted for $557 million or 44% of its total revenues, up 2% year over year. This was driven by growth in food, and academic and government markets.

However, coronavirus pandemic related woes acted as headwinds for the segment during the reported quarter.

Revenues from ACG were $463 million, accounting for 37% of total revenues. However, the top line declined 1% year over year. This was owing to sluggishness in the end-markets on account of disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Nevertheless, core growth in pharmaceutical and food markets remained positive.

DGG revenues decreased 8% year over year to $241 million, accounting for the remaining 19% of total revenues. The segment was impacted by slowdown in non-COVID Dx testing activities and decline in academic and government research activities.

Operating Results

In the fiscal third quarter, LSAG gross margin contracted 120 basis points (bps) on a year-over-year basis to 59.3% due to lower volumes.

DGG gross margin contracted 590 bps on a year-over-year basis to 49.8%. ACG gross margin also expanded 50 bps to 52.6%.

Research & development and selling, general & administrative expenses were $92 million and $347 million, down 8.9% and 5.2% year over year, respectively.

As a result, operating income improved 2.2% year over year to $230 million.

Operating margin for LSAG segment expanded 90 bps year over year to 22.6%.

DGG segment operating margin contracted 190 bps on a year-over-year basis to 17.2%. ACG operating margin was 28.4%, which expanded 220 bps from the year-ago quarter.

Balance Sheet

As of Jul 31, 2020, Agilent’s cash and cash equivalents were $1.36 billion, up from $1.32 billion as of Apr 30, 2020.

Accounts receivables were $930 million at the end of fiscal third quarter, up from $886 million at the end of fiscal second quarter.

Further, total debt (Short-term debt + Long-term debt) was $2.3 billion in the reported quarter compared with $2.5 billion in the prior quarter.

Operating cash flow was $290 million compared with $313 million in the last quarter. Agilent paid $56 million in dividends and repurchased 360,000 shares for $33 million.

Outlook

Agilent refrained from providing any guidance for the fiscal year 2020 and fiscal fourth-quarter 2020 owing to uncertainties related to COVID-19.

Nevertheless, the company anticipates strong momentum in research activities in academia and other markets. Further, improving elective medical procedures such as cancer screenings remain positives.

Additionally, continued lab openings are other positives.

Recent News

On Aug 18, 2020, Agilent revealed its plans for the expansion of state-of-the-art production facility developing short DNA and RNA molecules collectively known as 'oglios'. Notably, the facility is based in Frederick, Colorado.

On Jun 2, 2020, Agilent announced its intention to offer a series of senior notes. The interest rate, principal amount, maturity date and other terms of the notes are yet to be determined. The offering is subject to market and other conditions.

On May 20, Agilent announced that it will pay out a quarterly cash dividend of 18 cents per share on Jul 22 to its shareholders of record Jun 30.

On Apr 23, Agilent announced that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved its PD-L1 IHC 22C3 pharmDx as a companion diagnostic (CDx) to identify patients with non-small cell lung cancer who are appropriate for first-line monotherapy with KEYTRUDA (pembrolizumab) on the Dako Omnis platform.

On Mar 31, Agilent expanded its Raman technology portfolio. The new Agilent Vaya Raman raw material identity verification system is a handheld instrument that accelerates quality control testing in the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industries.

On Mar 30, Agilent introduced the Agilent K6460S Clinical Edition TQ LC/MS system, which has been designed to improve in vitro diagnostic workflows in clinical labs.

Valuation

Agilent shares are up 21.2% in the year-to-date period and up 46.9% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry is up 7.5% and the Zacks Computer & Technology sector is up 16.7% in the year-to-date period. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry is up 27.6% and the sector is up 32.6%.

The S&P 500 index is up 3.7% in the year-to-date period and 15.3% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 27.51X forward 12-month earnings, which compares to 27.32X for the Zacks sub-industry, 25.93X for the Zacks sector and 22.84X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 29.39X and as low as 17.1X, with a 5-year median of 22.7X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in-line with the market. Our $109 price target reflects 28.8X forward 12-month earnings.

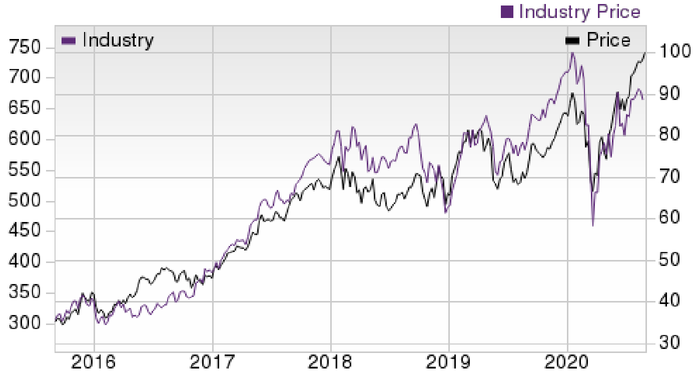
The table below shows summary valuation data for A

Valuation Multiples - A

		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F 12M	Current	27.51	27.32	25.93	22.84
	5-Year High	29.39	27.32	25.93	22.84
	5-Year Low	17.1	18.3	16.72	15.25
	5-Year Median	22.7	22.06	19.39	17.52
P/S F12M	Current	4.51	3.65	3.5	3.21
	5-Year High	5.02	4.12	3.59	3.44
	5-Year Low	2.63	2.63	2.32	2.54
	5-Year Median	4.09	3.52	3.1	3.01
EV/EBITDA TTM	Current	17.7	15.33	1055	10.23
	5-Year High	27.63	19.06	12.82	12.87
	5-Year Low	8.65	8.83	7.55	8.27
	5-Year Median	14.56	14.94	10.58	10.78

As of 09/02/2020

Industry Analysis **Zacks Industry Rank:** Bottom 23% (193 out of 251)



Source: Zacks Investment Research

Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Danaher Corporation **(DHR)**	Outperform	2
PerkinElmer, Inc. **(PKI)**	Outperform	1
Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc. **(TMO)**	Outperform	2
Abbott Laboratories **(ABT)**	Neutral	3
Eli Lilly and Company **(LLY)**	Neutral	3
MerckCo., Inc. **(MRK)**	Neutral	2
Novartis AG **(NVS)**	Neutral	3
Waters Corporation **(WAT)**	Neutral	3

The positions listed should not be deemed a recommendation to buy, hold or sell.

Industry Comparison Industry: Electronics - Testing Equipment

	A	X Industry	S&P 500	DHR	TMO	WAT
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Outperform	Outperform	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	2	2	3
VGM Score	C	-	-	D	C	C
Market Cap	31.89 B	13.52 B	24.30 B	148.95 B	174.48 B	13.44 B
# of Analysts	6	7	14	8	8	7
Dividend Yield	0.70%	0.41%	1.6%	0.34%	0.20%	0.00%
Value Score	D	-	-	D	C	D
Cash/Price	0.04	0.05	0.07	0.04	0.03	0.03
EV/EBITDA	26.65	19.58	13.46	36.72	26.95	17.58
PEG F1	2.65	3.21	3.09	3.30	1.94	7.18
P/B	6.40	4.31	3.25	4.51	5.84	NA
P/CF	26.08	19.70	13.12	33.79	24.39	19.48
P/E F1	31.12	32.08	22.15	38.36	29.04	27.02
P/S TTM	6.10	4.94	2.57	7.62	6.65	5.90
Earnings Yield	3.11%	3.11%	4.29%	2.61%	3.44%	3.70%
Debt/Equity	0.46	0.46	0.70	0.68	0.69	-8.06
Cash Flow ($/share)	3.96	3.96	6.93	6.21	18.08	11.14
Growth Score	C	-	-	C	B	A
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	15.32%	14.47%	10.41%	2.68%	14.10%	10.01%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	3.64%	-9.13%	-4.75%	23.84%	23.00%	-10.65%
Current Cash Flow Growth	9.85%	9.31%	5.22%	1.84%	6.99%	-4.57%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	-2.46%	9.18%	8.49%	5.87%	10.08%	5.07%
Current Ratio	2.47	2.47	1.35	2.20	2.62	1.82
Debt/Capital	31.43%	31.43%	42.92%	38.15%	40.86%	NA
Net Margin	13.23%	18.52%	10.25%	17.73%	14.12%	22.61%
Return on Equity	20.57%	16.22%	14.66%	11.88%	18.18%	-349.31%
Sales/Assets	0.55	0.55	0.50	0.30	0.45	0.87
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	1.84%	-4.28%	-1.42%	6.73%	9.77%	-7.50%
Momentum Score	A	-	-	C	D	F
Daily Price Change	2.27%	2.21%	1.82%	0.76%	1.69%	2.38%
1-Week Price Change	1.63%	1.59%	2.59%	-1.04%	-0.95%	0.55%
4-Week Price Change	5.65%	3.16%	4.80%	2.16%	5.04%	2.79%
12-Week Price Change	15.15%	10.92%	6.31%	21.59%	25.02%	11.57%
52-Week Price Change	45.95%	16.02%	5.43%	49.70%	54.27%	2.30%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	1,304,725	1,097,462	1,788,967	1,596,396	1,217,015	423,602
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-1.70%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	3.42%	0.00%	0.00%	0.92%	1.57%	-2.65%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	4.22%	5.27%	3.89%	12.14%	27.43%	0.32%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	2.27%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-5.67%

Industry Peers: DHR, TMO, WAT

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Zacks Style Scores

The Zacks Style Score is as a complementary indicator to the Zacks rating system, giving investors a way to focus on the highest rated stocks that best fit their own stock picking preferences.

Academic research has proven that stocks with the best Value, Growth and Momentum characteristics outperform the market. The Zacks Style Scores rate stocks on each of these individual styles and assigns a rating of A, B, C, D and F. We also produce the VGM Score (V for Value, G for Growth and M for Momentum), which combines the weighted average of the individual Style Scores into one score. This is perfectly suited for those who want their stocks to have the best scores across the board.

Value Score	D
Growth Score	C
Momentum Score	A
VGM Score	C

As an investor, you want to buy stocks with the highest probability of success. That means buying stocks with a Zacks Recommendation of Outperform, which also has a Style Score of an A or a B.

Disclosures

This report contains independent commentary to be used for informational purposes only. The analysts contributing to this report do not hold any shares of this stock. The analysts contributing to this report do not serve on the board of the company that issued this stock.The EPS and revenue forecasts are the Zacks Consensus estimates, unless indicated otherwise on the reports first page. Additionally, the analysts contributing to this report certify that the views expressed herein accurately reflect the analysts personal views as to the subject securities and issuers. ZIR certifies that no part of the analysts compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the specific recommendation or views expressed by the analyst in the report.

Additional information on the securities mentioned in this report is available upon request. This report is based on data obtained from sources we believe to be reliable, but is not guaranteed as to accuracy and does not purport to be complete. Any opinions expressed herein are subject to change.

ZIR is not an investment advisor and the report should not be construed as advice designed to meet the particular investment needs of any investor. Prior to making any investment decision, you are advised to consult with your broker, investment advisor, or other appropriate tax or financial professional to determine the suitability of any investment.This report and others like it are published regularly and not in response to episodic market activity or events affecting the securities industry.

This report is not to be construed as an offer or the solicitation of an offer to buy or sell the securities herein mentioned. ZIR or its officers, employees or customers may have a position long or short in the securities mentioned and buy or sell the securities from time to time.ZIR is not a broker-dealer.ZIR may enter into arms-length agreements with broker-dealers to provide this research to their clients.Zacks and its staff are not involved in investment banking activities for the stock issuer covered in this report.

ZIR uses the following rating system for the securities it covers. **Outperform-** ZIR expects that the subject company will outperform the broader U.S. equities markets over the next six to twelve months. **Neutral-** ZIR expects that the company will perform in line with the broader U.S. equities markets over the next six to twelve months. **Underperform-** ZIR expects the company will underperform the broader U.S. equities markets over the next six to twelve months.

Additional Disclosure

This material represents an assessment of the market and economic environment at a specific point in time and is not intended to be a forecast of future events, or a guarantee of future results. Forward-looking statements are subject to certain risks and uncertainties. Any statements that refer to expectations, projections or characterizations of future events or circumstances, including any underlying assumptions, are forwardlooking statements. Actual results, performance, or achievements may differ materially from those expressed or implied.

Returns quoted represent past performance which is no guarantee of future results. Investment returns and principal value will fluctuate so that when shares are redeemed, they may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance may be higher or lower than the performance shown.

Investing involves risk; principal loss is possible. There is no guarantee that companies that can issue dividends will declare, continue to pay or increase dividends.

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

52-Week High-Low: The range of the highest and lowest prices at which a stock has traded during the past year. This range is determined based on the stock's daily closing price which may differ from the intra-day high or low. Many investors use it as a technical indicator to determine a stock's current value and future price movement. The idea here is that if price breaks out from the 52-week range, in either direction, the momentum may continue in the same direction.

20-Day Average Volume (Shares): The average number of shares of a company traded in a day over the last 20 days. It is a direct indication of a security's overall liquidity. The higher the average daily trading volume, the easier it is to enter or exit the stock at a desired price with more buyers and sellers being available.

Daily Price Change: This is the percentage difference between a trading day's closing price and the prior trading day's closing price. This item is updated at 9 p.m. EST each day.

1-Week Price Change: This is the percentage change in a stock's closing price over the last 5 trading days. This change reflects the collective buying and selling sentiment over the 1-week period.

A strong weekly price increase for the stock, especially when accompanied by increased volume, is an indication of it gaining momentum.

4-Week Price Change: This is the percentage change in a stock's closing price over the last 20 trading days or past 4 weeks. This is a mediumterm price change metric and an indication of the stock gaining momentum.

12-Week Price Change: This is the percentage change of a stock's closing price over the last 60 trading days or past 12 weeks. Similar to 4-week price change, this is a medium-term price change metric. It shows whether a stock has been enjoying strong investor demand, or if it has been in consolidation, or distress over this period.

52-Week Price Change: This is the percentage change in a stock's closing price over the last 260 trading days or past 52 weeks. This long-term price change metric is a good reference point for investors. Some investors seek stocks with the best percentage price change over the last 52 weeks, expecting the momentum to continue.

Market Cap: The number of outstanding common shares of a company times its latest price per share. This figure represents a company's size, which indicates various characteristics, including price stability and risk, in which investors could be interested.

Year-To-Date Price Change: Change in a stock's daily closing price in the period of time beginning the first day of the current calendar year through to the previous trading day.

# of Analysts: Number of EPS estimates used in calculating the current-quarter consensus. These estimates come from the brokerage analysts tracking this stock. However, the number of such analysts tracking this stock may not match the number of estimates, as all brokerage analysts may not come up with an estimate or provide it to us.

Beta: A measure of risk commonly used to compare the volatility of a stock to the overall market. The S&P 500 Index is the base for calculating beta and carries a value of 1. A stock with beta below 1 is less risky than the market as a whole. And a stock with beta above 1 is riskier.

Dividend: The portion of earnings a company is expected to distribute to its common shareholders in the next 12 months for each share they own. Dividends are usually paid quarterly. Dividend payments reflect positively on a company and help maintain investors' trust. Investors typically find dividend-paying stocks appealing because the dividend adds to any market price appreciation to result in higher return on investment (ROI). Moreover, a steady or increasing dividend payment provides investors a cushion in a down market.

Dividend Yield: The ratio of a company's annual dividend to its share price. The annual dividend used in the ratio is calculated based on the mostrecent dividend paid by the company. Dividend yield is an estimate of the dividend-only return from a stock in the next 12 months. Since dividend itself doesn't change frequently, dividend yield usually changes with a stock's price movement. As a result, often an unusually high dividend yield is a result of weak stock price.

S&P 500 Index: The Standard & Poor's 500 (S&P 500) Index is an unmanaged group of securities considered to be representative of the stock market in general. It is a market-capitalization-weighted index of stocks of the 500 largest U.S. companies. Each stock's weight in the index is proportionate to its market value.

Industry: One of the 250+ groups that Zacks classifies all stocks into based on the nature of business. These groups are termed as expanded (aka "X") industries and map to their respective (economic) sectors; Zacks has 16 sectors.

Zacks Industry Rank: The Zacks Industry Rank is determined by calculating the average Zacks Rank for all stocks in the industry and then assigning an ordinal rank to it. For example, an industry with an average Zacks Rank of 1.6 is better than an industry with an average Zacks Rank of 2.3. So, the industry with the better average Zacks Rank would get a better Zacks Industry Rank. If an industry has the best average Zacks Rank, it would be considered the top industry (1 out of 250+), which would place it at the top 1% of Zacks-ranked industries. Studies have shown that roughly half of a stock's price movement can be attributed to the industry group it belongs to. In fact, the top 50% of Zacks-ranked industries outperforms the bottom 50% by a factor of more than 2 to 1.

Last EPS Surprise: The percentage deviation of a company's last reported earnings per share from the Zacks Consensus Estimate. Companies with a positive earnings surprise are more likely to surprise again in the future (or miss again if they recently missed).

Last Sales Surprise: The percentage deviation of a company's last reported sales from the Zacks Consensus Estimate.

Expected Report Date: This is an estimated date of a company's next earnings release. The information originated or gathered by Zacks Investment Research from its information providers or publicly available sources is the basis of this estimate.

Earnings ESP: The Zacks Earnings ESP compares the Most Accurate Estimate to the Zacks Consensus Estimate for the yet-to-be reported quarter. The Most Accurate Estimate is the most recent version of the Zacks Consensus EPS Estimate. The idea here is that analysts revising their estimates closer to an earnings release have the latest information, which could potentially be more accurate than what they and others contributing to the consensus had predicted earlier. Thus, a positive or negative Earnings ESP reading theoretically indicates the likely deviation of the actual earnings from the consensus estimate. However, the model's predictive power is significant for positive ESP readings only. A positive Earnings ESP is a strong predictor of an earnings beat, particularly when combined with a Zacks Rank #1 (Strong Buy), #2 (Buy) or #3 (Hold). Our research shows that stocks with this combination produce a positive surprise nearly 70% of the time.

Periods:

TTM: Trailing 12 months. Using TTM figures is an effective way of analyzing the most-recent financial data in an annualized format that helps neutralize the effects of seasonality and other quarter-to-quarter variation.

F1: Current fiscal year. This period is used to analyze the estimates for the ongoing full fiscal year.

F2: Next fiscal year. This period is used to analyze the estimates for the next full fiscal year.

F12M: Forward 12 months. Using F12M figures is an effective way of analyzing the near-term (the following four unreported quarters) estimates in an annualized manner. Instead of typically representing estimates for the full fiscal year, which may not represent the nitty-gritty of each quarter, F12M figures suggest an all-inclusive annualized estimate for the following four quarters. The annualization helps neutralize the potential effects of seasonality and other quarter-to-quarter variations.

P/E Ratio: The price-to-earnings ratio measures a company's current market price per share relative to its earnings per share (EPS). Usually, the trailing-12-month (TTM) EPS, current-fiscal-year (F1) EPS estimate, or forward-12-month (F12M) EPS estimate is used as the denominator. In essence, this ratio shows what the market is willing to pay today for each dollar of EPS. In other words, this ratio gives a sense of what the relative value of the company is at the already reported level of earnings or at a future level of earnings.

It is one of the most widely-used multiples for determining the value of a company and helps comparing its valuation with that of a competitor, the industry group or a benchmark.

PEG Ratio: The price/earnings to growth ratio is a stock's P/E ratio using current fiscal year (F1) EPS estimate divided by its expected EPS growth rate over the coming 3 to 5 years. This ratio essentially determines a stock's value by factoring in the company's expected earnings growth and is thus believed to provide a more complete picture than just the P/E ratio, particularly for faster-growing companies.

P/S Ratio: The price-to-sales ratio is calculated as a company's current price per share divided by trailing 12 months (TTM) sales or revenues per share. This ratio shows what the market is willing to pay today for each dollar of TTM sales per share. The P/S ratio is at times the only valuation metric when the company has yet to become profitable.

Cash/Price Ratio: The cash-to-price ratio or Cash Yield is calculated as cash and marketable securities per share divided by the company's current share price. Like the earnings yield, which shows the anticipated yield (or return) on a stock from earnings for each dollar invested, the cash yield does the same, with cash being the source of return instead of earnings. For example, a cash/price ratio of 0.08 suggests a return of 8% or 8 cents for every $1 investment.

EV/EBITDA Ratio: The EV/EBITDA ratio, also known as Enterprise Multiple, is calculated as a company's enterprise value (market capitalization + value of total long-term debt + book value of preferred shares - cash and marketable securities) divided by EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization). Usually, trailing-12-month (TTM) or forward-12-month (F12M) EBITDA is used as the denominator.

EV/Sales Ratio: The enterprise value-to-sales ratio is calculated as a company's enterprise value (market capitalization + value of total long-term debt + book value of preferred shares - cash and marketable securities) divided by annual sales. It is an expansion of the P/S valuation, which uses market value instead of enterprise value. The EV/Sales ratio is perceived as more accurate than P/S, in part, because the market capitalization does not take a company's debt into account when valuing it.

EV/CF Ratio: The enterprise value-to-cash flow ratio is calculated as a company's enterprise value (market capitalization + value of total long-term debt + book value of preferred shares - cash and marketable securities) divided by the trailing-12-month (TTM) operating cash flow. It's a measure of how long it would take to buy the entire business if you were able to use all the company's operating cash flow.

The EV/CF ratio is perceived as more accurate than the P/CF ratio, in part, because the market price does not take a company's debt into account when valuing it.

EV/FCF Ratio: The enterprise value-to-free cash flow metric compares a company's enterprise value to its trailing-12-month (TTM) free cash flow (FCF). This metric is very similar to the EV/CF ratio, but is considered a more exact measure owing to the fact that it uses free cash flow, which subtracts capital expenditures (CAPEX) from a company's total operating cash flow, thereby reflecting the actual cash flow available for funding growth activities and payments to shareholders.

P/EBITDA Ratio: The P/EBITDA ratio is calculated as a company's per share market value divided by EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization). This metric is very similar to the EV/EBITDA ratio, but is considered a little less exact measure as it uses market price, which does not take a company's debt into account. However, since EBITDA is often considered a proxy for cash income, the metric is used as a measure of what the market is willing to pay today for each dollar of the company's cash profitability in the trailing 12 months (TTM) or forward 12 months (F12M).

P/B Ratio: The price-to-book ratio is calculated as a company's current price per share divided by its book value (total assets – liabilities – preferred stocks) per share. In short, the book value is how much a company is worth. In other words, it reflects the total value of a company's assets that its common shareholders would receive if it were to be liquidated. So, the P/B ratio indicates whether you're paying higher or lower than what would remain if the company went bankrupt immediately. Investors typically use this metric to determine how a company's stock price stacks up to its intrinsic value.

P/TB Ratio: The price-to-tangible-book value ratio is calculated as a the per share market value of a company divided by the value of its tangible assets (total assets – liabilities – preferred stocks – intangible assets) per share. Tangible book value is the same thing as book value except it excludes the value of intangible assets to get a step closer to the baseline value of the company.

P/CF Ratio: The price-to-cash flow ratio measures a company's per share market price relative to its trailing-12-month (TTM) operating cash flow per share. This metric is used to determine whether a company is undervalued or overvalued relative to another stock, industry or sector. And like the P/E ratio, a lower number is typically considered better from the value perspective.

One of the reasons why P/CF ratio is often preferred over P/E ratio is the fact that operating cash flow adds back non-cash expenses such as depreciation and amortization to net income. This feature helps valuing stocks that have positive cash flow but are not profitable because of large noncash charges.

P/FCF Ratio: The price-to-free cash flow ratio is an extension of P/CF ratio, which uses trailing-12-month (TTM) free cash flow per share instead of operating cash flow per share. This metric is considered a more exact measure than P/CF ratio, as free cash flow subtracts capital expenditures (CAPEX) from a company's total operating cash flow, thereby reflecting the actual cash flow available for funding activities that generate additional revenues.

Earnings Yield: The earnings yield is calculated as current fiscal year (F1) EPS estimate divided by the company's current share price. The ratio, which is the inverse of the P/E ratio, measures the anticipated yield (or return) from earnings for each dollar invested in a stock today.

For example, earnings yield for a stock, which is trading at $35 and expected to earn $3 per share in the current fiscal year (F1), would be 0.0857 (3/35 = 0.0857) or 8.57%. In other words, for $1 invested in the stock today, the yield from earnings is anticipated to be 8.57 cents.

Investors most commonly compare the earnings yield of a stock to that of a broad market index (such as the S&P 500) and prevailing interest rates, such as the current 10-year Treasury yield. Since bonds and stocks compete for investors' dollars, stock investors typically demand a higher yield for the extra risk they assume compared to investors of U.S. Treasury-backed securities that offer virtually risk-free returns. This additional return is referred to as the risk premium.

Debt/Equity Ratio: The debt-to-equity ratio is calculated as a company's total liabilities divided by its shareholder equity. This metric is used to gauge a company's financial leverage. In other words, it is a measure of the degree to which a company is financing its operations through debt versus its own funds. The higher the ratio, the higher the risk for shareholders.

However, this ratio is difficult to compare across industry groups where ideal amounts of debt vary. Some businesses are more capital intensive than others and typically require higher debt to finance their operations. So, a company's debt-to-equity ratio should be compared with other companies in the same industry.

Cash Flow ($/share): Cash flow per share is calculated as operating cash flow (after-tax earnings + depreciation + other non-cash charges) divided by common shares outstanding. It is used by many investors as a measure of a company's financial strength. Since cash flow per share takes into consideration a company's ability to generate cash by adding back non-cash expenses, it is regarded by some as a more accurate measure of a company's financial situation than earnings per share, which could be artificially deflated.

Current Ratio: The current ratio or liquidity ratio is a company's current assets divided by its current liabilities. It measures a company's ability to pay short-term obligations. A current ratio that is in line with the industry average or slightly higher is generally considered acceptable. A current ratio that is lower than the industry average would indicate a higher risk of distress or default. A higher number is usually better. However, a very high current ratio compared to the industry average could be an indication of inefficient use of assets by management.

Debt/Capital Ratio: Debt-to-capital ratio is a company's total debt (interest-bearing debt + both short- and long-term liabilities) divided its total capital (interest-bearing debt + shareholders' equity). It is a measure of a company's financial leverage. All else being equal, the higher the debt-to-capital ratio, the riskier the stock.

However, this ratio can vary widely from industry to industry, the ideal amount of required debt being different. Some businesses are more capital intensive than others and typically require higher debt to finance their operations. So, a company's debt-to-capital ratio should be compared with the same for its industry.

Net Margin: Net margin is calculated as net income divided by sales. It shows how much of each dollar in sales generated by a company translates into profit. For example, if a company's net margin is 15%, its net income is 15 cents for every $1 of sales it makes.

A change in margin can reflect either a change in business conditions, or a company's cost controls, or both. If a company's expenses are growing faster than sales, its net margin will decline. However, different net margin rates are considered good for different industries, so it's better to compare net margin rates of companies in the same industry group.

Return on Equity: Return on equity (ROE) is calculated as trailing-12-month net income divided by trailing-12-month average shareholder equity (including reinvested earnings). This metric is considered a measure of how effectively management is using a company's assets to generate profits. For example, if a company's ROE is 10%, it creates 10 cents profits for every $1 shareholder equity, which is basically the company's assets minus debt. A company's ROE deemed good or bad depends on what's normal for its peers or industry group.

Sales/Assets Ratio: The sales-to-assets ratio or asset utilization ratio or asset turnover ratio is calculated as a company's annual sales divided by average assets (average of assets at the beginning of the year and at the year's end). This metric helps investors understand how effectively a company is using its assets to generate sales. For example, a sales-to-assets ratio of 2.5 indicates that the company generated $2.50 in sales for every $1 of assets on its books.

The higher the sales-to-assets ratio, the better the company is performing. However, similar to many other ratios, the asset turnover ratio tends to be higher for companies in certain industries/sectors than in others. So, a company's sales-to-assets ratio should be compared with the same for its industry/sector.

Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years): This is the average annual (trailing-12-month) EPS growth rate over the last 3-5 years. This metric helps investors see how a company's EPS has grown from a long-term perspective.

Note: There are many factors that can influence short-term numbers — a recession will reduce this number, while a recovery will inflate it. The longterm perspective helps smooth out short-term events.

Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0): This is the estimated EPS growth rate for the current financial year. It is calculated as the consensus estimate for the current fiscal year (F1) divided by the reported EPS for the last completed fiscal year (F0).

Current Cash Flow Growth: It measures the latest year-over-year change in operating cash flow. Cash flow growth tells an investor how quickly a company is generating inflows of cash from operations. A positive change in the cash flow is desired and shows that more 'cash' is coming in than going out.

Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years): This is the annualized change in cash flow over the last 3-5 years. The change in a longer period helps put the current reading into proper perspective. By looking at the rate, rather than the actual dollar value, the comparison across the industry and peers becomes easier.

Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0): This metric looks at the estimated sales growth for the current year. It is calculated as sales estimate for the current fiscal year (F1) divided by the reported sales for the last completed fiscal year (F0).

Like EPS growth, a higher rate is better for sales growth. A look at a company's projected sales growth instantly tells you what the outlook is for their products and services. However, different sales growth rates are considered good for different industries, so it's better to compare sales growth rates of companies in the same industry group.

EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change: The percentage change in the Zacks Consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal year over the past week. The change in a company's consensus EPS estimate (or earnings estimate revision) has proven to be strongly correlated with the near-term price movement of its shares. It is an integral part of the Zacks Rank.

If a stock's consensus EPS estimate is $1.10 now versus $1.00 a week ago, that will be reflected as a 10% upward revision. If, on the other hand, it went from $1.00 to 90 cents, that would be a 10% downward revision.

EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change: The percentage change in the Zacks Consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal year over the past four weeks.

A stock's earnings estimate revision in a 1-week period is important. But it's more meaningful to look at the longer-term revision. And, of course, the 4-week change helps put the 1-week change into proper perspective.

EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change: The percentage change in the Zacks Consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal year over the past 12 weeks.

This metric essentially shows how the consensus EPS estimate has changed over a period longer than 1 week or 4 weeks.

EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change: The percentage change in the Zacks Consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal quarter over the past four weeks.

While the revision in consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal year is strongly correlated with the near-term price movement of its shares, the estimate revision for the current fiscal quarter is an important metric as well, especially over the short term, and particularly as a stock approaches its earnings date. If a stock's Q1 EPS estimate decreases ahead of its earnings release, it's usually a negative sign, whereas an increase is a positive sign.