

AmerisourceBergen (ABC)

\$97.00 (As of 02/21/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$102.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

Zacks Recommendation:

Neutral

(Since: 01/04/19)

Prior Recommendation: Underperform

Short Term: 1-3 Months

Zacks Rank: (1-5)

2-Buy

Zacks Style Scores:

VGM:A

Value: A

Growth: A

Momentum: F

Summary

AmerisourceBergen exited the fiscal first quarter on a strong note, wherein both earnings and revenues beat the consensus mark. The company continues to gain from Pharmaceutical segment and World Courier business, which have been generating huge profits for quite some time. Its specialty distribution business also continues to contribute significantly to the top line. Strong fiscal 2020 outlook instills investor optimism in the stock. AmerisourceBergen outperformed the industry in a year's time. Meanwhile, the company faces other headwinds like conversion of branded drugs and lower price generics. Cutthroat competition in the MedTech space adds to woes.

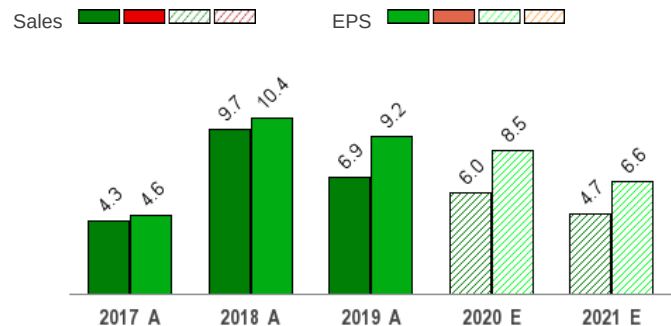
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52 Week High-Low	\$97.50 - \$70.55
20 Day Average Volume (sh)	1,392,352
Market Cap	\$20.0 B
YTD Price Change	14.1%
Beta	1.01
Dividend / Div Yld	\$1.68 / 1.7%
Industry	Medical - Dental Supplies
Zacks Industry Rank	Top 30% (77 out of 255)

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	5.4%
Last Sales Surprise	-0.3%
EPS F1 Est- 4 week change	2.2%
Expected Report Date	NA
Earnings ESP	-0.2%
P/E TTM	13.4
P/E F1	12.6
PEG F1	1.7
P/S TTM	0.1

Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	50,208 E	48,130 E	50,313 E	50,676 E	199,346 E
2020	47,865 A	46,205 E	47,479 E	48,283 E	190,450 E
2019	45,392 A	43,320 A	45,239 A	45,638 A	179,589 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	\$1.83 E	\$2.39 E	\$2.05 E	\$1.85 E	\$8.20 E
2020	\$1.76 A	\$2.28 E	\$1.92 E	\$1.74 E	\$7.69 E
2019	\$1.60 A	\$2.11 A	\$1.76 A	\$1.61 A	\$7.09 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 02/21/2020. The reports text is as of 02/24/2020.

Overview

Chesterbrook, PA-based AmerisourceBergen is one of the world's largest pharmaceutical services companies, which focuses on providing drug distribution and related services to reduce health care costs and improve patient outcomes.

The company reports through two segments – Pharmaceutical Distribution and Other. The **Pharmaceutical Distribution business** includes the operations of AmerisourceBergen Drug Corporation (ABDC) and AmerisourceBergen Specialty Group (ABSG). The segment services healthcare providers in the pharmaceutical supply channel. The ABSG division provides pharmaceutical distribution and other services mainly to physicians, who specialize in a variety of diseases, especially oncology, and to other health care providers, including dialysis clinics. The ABDC division is involved in the distribution of branded pharma drugs and generic drugs, over-the-counter healthcare products, home healthcare supplies and equipment and related services to a range of healthcare providers.

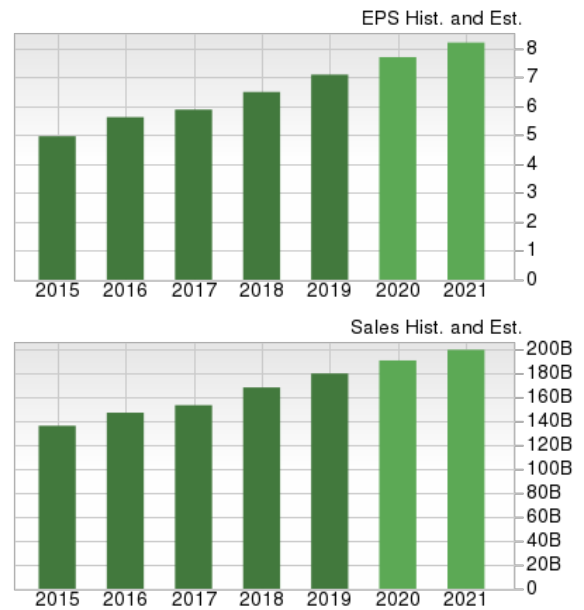
The “**Other**” segment consists of AmerisourceBergen Consulting Services (ABCS), World Courier and MWI Veterinary Supply. The ABCS business provides commercialization support services to pharmaceutical and biotech manufacturers.

Key Acquisitions & Divestitures

In Jan 2018, AmerisourceBergen declared that it has completed the acquisition of H.D. Smith, the largest independent wholesaler in the United States, for \$815 million in cash. The deal was initiated back in Nov 2017. The acquisition is expected to be slightly accretive to adjusted earnings per share in fiscal year 2018. Furthermore, the deal is expected to return 15 cents to adjusted earnings per share in fiscal year 2020. It is designed to strengthen the company's support to community pharmacy and drive long-term, durable value.

FY19 at a Glance

The company's fiscal year ends on Sep 30. Total revenue in fiscal 2019 came in at \$179.56 billion. The Pharmaceutical Distribution Services contributed to 96.2% of net revenues in fiscal 2019. The other segment accounted for 3.8% of net revenues.



Reasons To Buy:

- ▲ **Shares Up:** Over the past year, shares of AmerisourceBergen have gained 14.5% compared with the industry's decline of 3%. Meanwhile, the S&P 500 Index rose 18.6% in the same time frame.

Robust fiscal 2020 outlook, solid organic revenue growth, strong performing World Courier unit and Specialty distribution business continue to drive the company's performance.

- ▲ **Solid Fiscal 2020 Guidance:** AmerisourceBergen has updated fiscal year 2020 outlook, reflecting the company's strong performance, prudent share buybacks and the exit of the PharMEDium business.

Adjusted EPS is now estimated in the range of \$7.55-\$7.80 (up from the previously guided range of \$7.30-\$7.60). Adjusted operating income is now projected to grow in the mid-single-digit percent range, up from the previously guided low-to-mid single digit percent range.

Operating income at Pharmaceutical Distribution Services segment is now anticipated to improve in the mid-single digit percent range up from the low-to-mid single digit percent range.

Nonetheless, the company has reaffirmed all the other previously communicated aspects of its fiscal 2020 guidance and assumptions, which are as follows:

The company estimates revenue growth in the mid-to-high single digit percent range.

For the Other segment the metric is estimated to grow in the high-single digit percent range.

Adjusted operating expenses is projected to increase in the mid-single digit percent range.

- ▲ **World Courier Business Holds Ground:** World Courier, a global leader in specialty logistics and a part of AmerisourceBergen, designs and executes world-class logistics processes. Per management, its position as the leader in global specialty logistics services drove compelling volume growth and overall performance for the company. The company also announced its designation as the first logistics company to obtain global Good Distribution Practices, or GDP, certification against three major GDP standards and the only provider to hold a GDP certification with such wide and global scope.

The business has been delivering robust results in recent times and the fiscal first quarter was not an exception. World Courier's robust business fundamentals along with Nova and Cocoon investments position the company for another year of strong growth.

Going forward, World Courier will continue to design and deploy patient-centric and forward-thinking transport services in new areas like in-home clinical trials, making treatments in patients' home possible in virtually every therapeutic area.

- ▲ **Pharmaceutical Distribution in Focus:** Pharmaceutical Distribution serves healthcare providers in the pharmaceutical supply channel. AmerisourceBergen has been witnessing strong revenue growth in this unit in the last couple of quarters. The segment rides on increasing volume and an expanding customer base. Strong organic growth rates in the U.S. pharmaceutical market, improving patient access to medical care, improved economic conditions and population demographics should benefit the segment in the quarters to come. In fiscal first-quarter 2020, revenues at this segment totaled \$46.04 billion, improving 5.2% on a year-over-year basis. Segmental operating income was \$391.7 million, up 5% year over year. The segment continues to benefit from consistent robust specialty product sales and increase in volume related to growth of some of its largest customers contributed to the improvement.

- ▲ **Other Segment to Drive Growth:** This segment includes AmerisourceBergen Consulting Services (ABCS), World Courier and MWI Veterinary Supply. Revenues at this segment came in at \$1.85 billion, up 10.5% year over year. This upside was driven by growth in MWI, ABCS and World Courier.

Operating income in the segment was \$104.5 million in the quarter, up 14.9% year over year primarily driven by the performance of World Courier and ABCS.

- ▲ **Operational Efficiencies:** In the last two years alone, AmerisourceBergen invested more than \$1 billion in capital expenditures to create operational efficiencies, leverage scale and provide best-in-class customer service. The company is now well positioned to realize long-term benefits from. Further, the recent U.S. tax legislation enhances the company's ability to invest in business, to innovate and to deliver value to its shareholders. Over the long-term, this enables AmerisourceBergen to grow the U.S. business. Recently, the company made strategic investments in IT systems, positioning AmerisourceBergen to realize greater operational efficiency and increased operating leverage.

- ▲ **Generics & New Product Launches to Drive Growth:** AmerisourceBergen is expected to benefit from generics growth in the long run. AmerisourceBergen is well-positioned to help ensure products get to market as efficiently as possible. Strong organic growth rates in the U.S. pharmaceutical market, improving patient access to care, improved economic conditions and population demographics, introduction of new innovative drugs like hepatitis C drugs, and a continued good brand pricing environment should drive growth. Moreover, the company's focus on specialty drugs has boded well. As per the IMS, pharmaceutical sales are estimated to grow approximately 7.1% annually over a five-year period through 2020 primarily due to strong demand, favorable pricing and new product introductions.

- ▲ **Strategic Acquisitions:** AmerisourceBergen has been actively pursuing acquisitions to strengthen its core areas. In the recent past, the company announced that it acquired H.D. Smith, the largest independent wholesaler in the United States. Notably, the acquisition drove AmerisourceBergen's specialty distribution business in the first quarter.

The MWI Veterinary acquisition has diversified the company's existing pharmaceutical distribution & services businesses into the attractive

The company should benefit from continued solid organic revenue growth, World Courier unit and Specialty distribution business.

animal health market, which holds huge potential at the moment. MWI Veterinary Supply sells pharmaceuticals, vaccines, parasiticides, diagnostics, capital equipment, supplies, pet food and nutritional products. Organic growth, new innovative product introductions and market share gains continue to boost AmerisourceBergen's business. In fiscal first-quarter 2020, AmerisourceBergen's Other business unit was significantly driven by MWI apart from ABCS and World Courier.

▲ **Other Deals to Boost Business:** We are positive on the deals signed by AmerisourceBergen, which should boost its top line. By the end of first quarter of fiscal 2019, management at AmerisourceBergen announced that it partners with Good Neighbor Pharmacy Network, Walgreens and others on safe drug disposal programs. The company has already entered into a strategic agreement with Walgreen Boots Alliance. The agreement includes a 10-year pharmaceutical distribution contract with Walgreens Boot Alliance, under which the company will distribute branded and generic pharmaceutical products to Walgreens.

Per management, the company's Pharmaceutical distribution Services unit saw robust growth in the fiscal first quarter of 2018 mostly due to onboarding new business Walgreens. Moreover, the company announced that it has extended the term of its 10-year pharmaceutical distribution agreement with Walgreens Boot Alliance for three years. The contract will now expire in 2026.

Notably, the company entered into a long-term strategic relationship with OneOncology — a national partnership of community oncologists in the United States. Additionally, Innomar Strategies, the Canadian operations business unit of the company, added Chronically Simple to its digital solutions portfolio. Chronically Simple is a secure web-based service and mobile application that has been developed to meet the complex needs of patients with chronic illnesses and ongoing health challenges.

UPS announced its drone logistics partnership with AmerisourceBergen. The collaboration will deploy the UPS Flight Forward drone airline to transport certain pharmaceuticals, supplies and records to qualifying medical campuses, which are served by AmerisourceBergen throughout the United States, and then extend its use to other sites of care. This partnership is likely to provide flexibility in meeting patient needs with emerging technology, which in turn will boost supply chain efficiencies in unique and innovative ways.

Reasons To Sell:

- ▼ **Problems in PharMEDium Unit:** In late January 2020 AmerisourceBergen decided to exit the PharMEDium compounding business and, consequently, the company will cease all commercial and administrative operations related to this business. Given the decision to exit this business, the company anticipates to claim an ordinary income tax deduction and estimates that it will realize a cash tax benefit in fiscal 2020 through fiscal 2022 totaling around \$500-\$600 million. Additionally, due to this decision, the company estimates to impair the majority of the remaining \$55 million of its tangible assets and all of the remaining \$185 million of its intangible assets in the fiscal second quarter.
- ▼ **Generic Deflation:** Generic deflation has been higher than historic norms for several quarters for AmerisourceBergen, creating a headwind for the business. Generic deflation is still mid to high single-digits for the company.
- The company has been impacted by several factors, including accelerated deflation of generic drugs and a lower contribution from generic launches. These trends have intensified the effect of a shift in product mix toward lower-margin, higher-priced specialty and branded drugs, as well as the lack of generic inflation.
- ▼ **Competitive Industry:** AmerisourceBergen operates in a highly competitive pharmaceutical distribution and related health care services market. The company's primary competitors include Cardinal Health, McKesson along with national generic distributors and regional distributors. The generic industry is facing consolidation of customers and manufacturers, globalization and increasing quality and regulatory challenges. The company faces additional competition from manufacturers, chain drugstores, specialty distributors and packaging and health care technology companies. Meanwhile, ABSG is facing competition from the likes of McKesson, Cardinal Health, FFF Enterprises, Henry Schein and UPS Logistics. Increased competition will impact the company's business.
- ▼ **Contract Renewals a Headwind:** The company's largest customer – Walgreens accounted for a significant proportion of total revenue. The loss of any major customer will adversely impact the top line. However, since early fiscal 2018, AmerisourceBergen had no major contract renewals on the horizon. As of now, the company is seeing competitive stability across the industry.

Headwinds include MWI slowdown and cutthroat competition in the Medtech space.

Last Earnings Report

AmerisourceBergen Q1 Earnings Beat, Revenues Miss

AmerisourceBergen Corporation reported first-quarter fiscal 2020 adjusted earnings per share of \$1.76 surpassing the Zacks Consensus Estimate of \$1.67 by 5.4%. The figure also improved 10% year over year.

The better-than-expected bottom-line performance can be attributed to increase in adjusted operating income, lower share count and reduced net interest expense.

Revenues improved 5.4% to \$47.86 billion in the reported quarter. The figure also beat the Zacks Consensus Estimate by 0.3%.

Quarter Ending **12/2019**

Report Date	Jan 30, 2020
Sales Surprise	-0.25%
EPS Surprise	5.39%
Quarterly EPS	1.76
Annual EPS (TTM)	7.24

Segmental Analysis

Pharmaceutical Distribution Segment

Revenues at this segment totaled \$46.04 billion, improving 5.2% on a year-over-year basis. Consistent robust specialty product sales and increase in volume related to growth of some of its largest customers contributed to the improvement.

Segmental operating income was \$391.7 million, up 5% year over year. Increase in gross profit drove the upside.

Other Segment

This segment includes AmerisourceBergen Consulting Services (ABCS), World Courier and MWI Veterinary Supply.

Revenues at this segment came in at \$1.85 billion, up 10.5% year over year. This upside was driven by growth in MWI, ABCS and World Courier.

Operating income in the segment was \$104.5 million in the quarter, up 14.9% year over year primarily on the back of the performance of World Courier and ABCS.

Margin Analysis

In the quarter under review, AmerisourceBergen reported adjusted gross profit of \$1.24 billion, up 3.3% on a year-over-year basis. As a percentage of revenues, adjusted gross margin was 2.6% in the quarter, down 5 bps from the year-ago quarter.

AmerisourceBergen reported adjusted operating income of \$495.2 million, up 5% year over year. As a percentage of revenues, adjusted operating margin was 1% in the quarter, which was down 1 basis point from the prior-year quarter.

Fiscal 2020 Guidance Updated

AmerisourceBergen has updated fiscal year 2020 outlook, reflecting the company's strong performance, prudent share buybacks and the exit of the PharMEDium business.

Adjusted EPS is now estimated in the range of \$7.55-\$7.80 (up from the previously guided range of \$7.30-\$7.60). The Zacks Consensus Estimate is currently pegged at \$7.53, which is below management's guided range.

Adjusted operating income is now projected to grow in the mid-single-digit percent range, up from the previously guided low-to-mid single digit percent range.

Operating income at Pharmaceutical Distribution Services segment is now anticipated to improve in the mid-single digit percent range up from the low-to-mid single digit percent range.

Further, the company now anticipates weighted average diluted shares to be around 208 million (down from the previously guided band of 209-210 million).

Nonetheless, the company has reaffirmed all the other previously communicated aspects of its fiscal 2020 guidance and assumptions, which are as follows:

The company estimates revenue growth in the mid-to-high single digit percent range.

For the Other segment the metric is estimated to grow in the high-single digit percent range.

Adjusted operating expenses is projected to increase in the mid-single digit percent range.

Adjusted free cash flow is estimated to be around \$1.5 billion.

The company anticipates adjusted effective tax rate in the range of 21-22%.

Valuation

periods, respectively. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry and Zacks Medical Market are up 5.2% and 2% in the year-to-date period. Over the past year, stocks in the Zacks sub-industry are down 3% while that in the sector are up 1.7%.

The S&P 500 index is up 3.6% in the year-to-date period and 18.6% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 12.29X Forward 12-months earnings, which compares to 18.16X for the Zacks sub-industry, 21.21X for the Zacks sector and 19.09X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 23.18X and as low as 10.1X, with a 5-year median of 13.42X.

Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in line with the market. Our \$102 price target reflects 12.9X forward 12-months earnings.

The table below shows summary valuation data for ABC.

Valuation Multiples - ABC					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	12.29	18.16	21.21	19.09
	5-Year High	23.18	19.99	21.24	19.34
	5-Year Low	10.1	13.7	15.83	15.18
	5-Year Median	13.42	16.67	18.89	17.47
P/S F12M	Current	0.1	0.37	2.83	3.51
	5-Year High	0.18	0.37	3.83	3.51
	5-Year Low	0.08	0.23	2.45	2.54
	5-Year Median	0.11	0.28	2.97	3
P/B TTM	Current	6.5	4.65	4.63	4.83
	5-Year High	35.25	4.93	5.05	4.9
	5-Year Low	4.89	2.53	3.44	2.85
	5-Year Median	7.7	3.46	4.32	3.62

As of 02/21/2020

Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Top 30% (77 out of 255)



Top Peers

Owens & Minor, Inc. (OMI)	Outperform
Cardinal Health, Inc. (CAH)	Neutral
Herbalife LTD. (HLF)	Neutral
Henry Schein, Inc. (HSIC)	Neutral
McKesson Corporation (MCK)	Neutral
PetIQ, Inc. (PETQ)	Neutral
Thermo Fisher Scientific Inc. (TMO)	Neutral
Nu Skin Enterprises, Inc. (NUS)	Underperform

Industry Comparison Industry: Medical - Dental Supplies				Industry Peers		
	ABC Neutral	X Industry	S&P 500	CAH Neutral	HSIC Neutral	MCK Neutral
VGM Score	A	-	-	A	A	C
Market Cap	19.97 B	1.86 B	24.03 B	17.43 B	9.91 B	30.25 B
# of Analysts	8	5	13	8	9	8
Dividend Yield	1.73%	0.00%	1.76%	3.22%	0.00%	0.96%
Value Score	A	-	-	A	A	A
Cash/Price	0.17	0.07	0.04	0.10	0.01	0.07
EV/EBITDA	12.56	12.56	14.08	7.39	10.83	9.40
PEG Ratio	1.67	2.04	2.08	1.82	2.06	1.64
Price/Book (P/B)	6.51	4.19	3.29	17.39	2.73	4.74
Price/Cash Flow (P/CF)	10.03	13.50	13.42	6.88	13.99	5.75
P/E (F1)	12.61	21.50	19.00	11.22	18.26	11.58
Price/Sales (P/S)	0.11	1.70	2.64	0.12	0.99	0.13
Earnings Yield	7.93%	3.60%	5.26%	8.91%	5.48%	8.64%
Debt/Equity	1.18	0.32	0.70	6.73	0.22	1.33
Cash Flow (\$/share)	9.67	1.80	7.03	8.69	4.83	29.73
Growth Score	A	-	-	A	B	D
Hist. EPS Growth (3-5 yrs)	8.88%	8.88%	10.84%	2.79%	8.77%	4.15%
Proj. EPS Growth (F1/F0)	8.52%	11.94%	7.09%	0.85%	5.35%	8.81%
Curr. Cash Flow Growth	-0.05%	4.49%	6.72%	-0.80%	-15.93%	-1.89%
Hist. Cash Flow Growth (3-5 yrs)	12.37%	12.65%	8.25%	7.74%	8.23%	16.28%
Current Ratio	0.95	1.65	1.22	1.03	1.58	0.98
Debt/Capital	54.23%	26.69%	42.37%	87.06%	23.03%	60.82%
Net Margin	0.36%	3.00%	11.56%	-2.81%	6.96%	-0.41%
Return on Equity	49.95%	15.19%	16.80%	45.21%	15.01%	36.40%
Sales/Assets	4.65	1.02	0.55	3.70	1.40	3.73
Proj. Sales Growth (F1/F0)	6.05%	5.08%	3.90%	5.08%	3.16%	6.48%
Momentum Score	F	-	-	D	A	F
Daily Price Chg	0.49%	0.00%	-0.83%	-1.16%	-2.00%	0.11%
1 Week Price Chg	2.63%	1.92%	1.65%	2.37%	3.09%	7.49%
4 Week Price Chg	6.41%	0.00%	-0.37%	8.84%	-4.87%	10.22%
12 Week Price Chg	9.59%	9.19%	3.74%	8.15%	-3.46%	16.86%
52 Week Price Chg	14.14%	6.54%	14.14%	9.08%	12.60%	29.56%
20 Day Average Volume	1,392,352	365,561	1,992,841	3,040,574	1,093,988	2,660,198
(F1) EPS Est 1 week change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
(F1) EPS Est 4 week change	2.16%	0.00%	-0.02%	6.07%	0.00%	0.60%
(F1) EPS Est 12 week change	2.06%	0.00%	-0.17%	6.33%	-0.06%	2.56%
(Q1) EPS Est Mthly Chg	-0.49%	0.00%	-0.48%	1.18%	0.33%	-2.23%

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	A
Growth Score	A
Momentum Score	F
VGM Score	A

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.

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