

Amazon.com Inc. (AMZN)

\$3,294.62 (As of 09/04/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$3,536.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

Zacks Recommendation:
Neutral

(Since: 10/28/19)

Prior Recommendation: Underperform

Short Term: 1-3 Months

Zacks Rank: (1-5)

3-Hold

Zacks Style Scores:

VGM:A

Value: D

Growth: A

Momentum: A

Summary

Amazon is gaining on coronavirus-led spike in online orders. Further, solid growth in its online stores sales is driving the top-line growth. Moreover, surge in online grocery shopping is a major positive. Additionally, solid Prime momentum owing to ultrafast delivery services and expanding content portfolio remains a tailwind. Further, strong adoption rate of AWS is aiding the company's cloud dominance. Moreover, expanding AWS portfolio is contributing well. Additionally, improving Alexa skills and features are positives. Also, expanding smart home products offerings are tailwinds. Notably, the stock has outperformed its industry on a year-to-date basis. However, accelerating coronavirus related expenses might hurt the company's profitability in the near term. Also, foreign exchange headwinds and rising cloud competition are concerns.

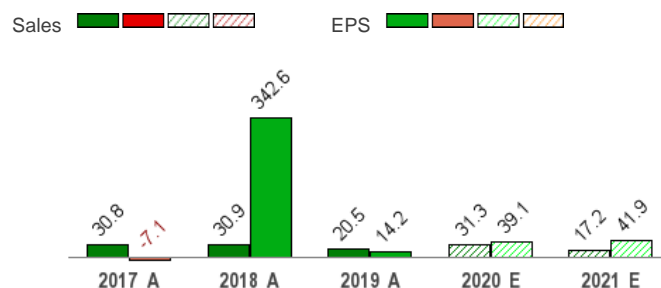
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	\$3,552.25 - \$1,626.03
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	4,072,822
Market Cap	\$1,687.0 B
Year-To-Date Price Change	82.3%
Beta	1.32
Dividend / Dividend Yield	\$0.00 / 0.0%
Industry	Internet - Commerce
Zacks Industry Rank	Top 27% (69 out of 251)

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	492.0%
Last Sales Surprise	9.0%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	0.0%
Expected Report Date	10/22/2020
Earnings ESP	0.0%
P/E TTM	129.5
P/E F1	103.0
PEG F1	3.1
P/S TTM	5.2

Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	90,754 E	99,170 E	106,780 E	127,680 E	431,557 E
2020	75,452 A	88,912 A	92,572 E	111,163 E	368,348 E
2019	59,700 A	63,404 A	69,981 A	87,437 A	280,522 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	\$8.69 E	\$9.67 E	\$10.04 E	\$12.46 E	\$45.40 E
2020	\$5.01 A	\$10.30 A	\$7.50 E	\$9.42 E	\$32.00 E
2019	\$7.09 A	\$5.22 A	\$4.23 A	\$6.47 A	\$23.01 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 09/04/2020. The reports text is as of 09/05/2020.

Overview

Amazon.com is one of the largest e-commerce providers, with sprawling operations in North America, now spreading across the globe. Its online retail business revolves around the Prime program well-supported by the company's massive distribution network. Further, the Whole Foods Market acquisition helped Amazon establish footprint in physical grocery supermarket space.

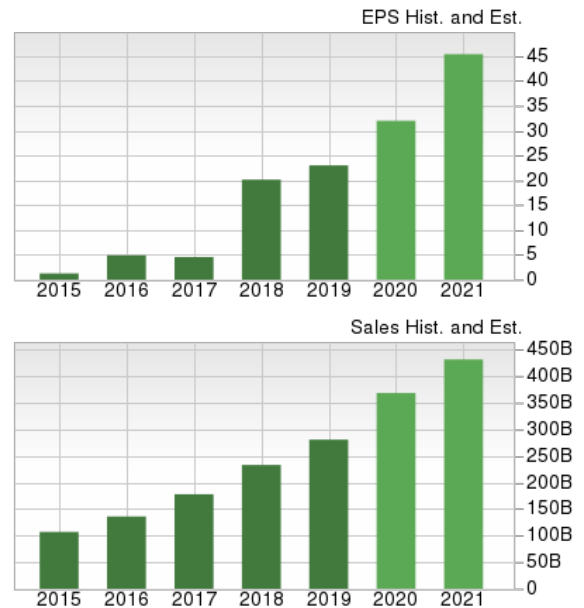
Amazon also enjoys dominant position in the cloud-computing market, particularly in the Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) space, thanks to Amazon Web Services (AWS), which is one of its high-margin generating businesses.

Amazon has also become a household name with its Alexa powered Echo devices. Artificial Intelligence (AI) backed Alexa is helping the company sell products and services.

Revenues were \$280.5 billion in 2019. The company reports revenue under three broad heads—North America, International and AWS, which generated 60.9%, 26.6% and 12.5% of total revenues, respectively.

Headquartered in Seattle, WA, Amazon targets three categories of customers—consumers, sellers and website developers. Consumers are offered variety, convenience and free delivery of goods displayed on the company's websites. The agreements with sellers are varied, enabling them to use the company's websites to either sell their merchandise directly, or redirect customers to the sellers' own branded websites. In case of the latter arrangement, Amazon earns a fee for the sales thus generated.

Competition comes in the form of traditional retailers, other online retailers, media companies, web portals, search engines, e-commerce companies and cloud computing service providers.



Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Buy:

- ▲ Amazon.com is **one of the largest e-commerce companies** in the world. Although the primary product line was books at first, the company rapidly diversified into a host of other product categories. The current focus is on building video content, primarily for Prime subscribers because the growth prospects in that market are considerable. Product selection, a superior user experience, bargains and customer feedback have helped the company build a strong position for itself in the fast-growing ecommerce market. The growth of the e-commerce industry with consumers increasingly buying things online has proved to be favorable for the company. While the big brands may build their own online stores over time, a platform like Amazon allows discovery by new buyers. Smaller players are far more dependent on Amazon as they don't have the resources that Amazon has to invest in technology and fulfilment to generate the kind of reach that Amazon can deliver. Moreover, considering opportunities in international markets, the company's high growth rates are likely to be sustained over the next few years.
- ▲ Amazon keeps its retail business very hard to beat on price, choice, and convenience with the help of a solid loyalty system in **Prime and its FBA strategy**. The company continues to push advantages exclusively to Prime members, thus encouraging them to spend more on Amazon. The current focus is on building video content, primarily for Prime subscribers because the growth prospects in the market are considerable. Prime members are much more loyal and spend double the amount spent by non-Prime members.
- ▲ Amazon's strategy of **gradually merging online and offline retail** looks promising. It will not only reshape the retail landscape but also help it fend off competition, if it could manage a first mover advantage. It has added online and offline features to its bookstores and is going the same way with innovations such as drive-in-grocery delivery service (AmazonFresh Pickup - order groceries online and collect them from a store nearby) and "cashier-less" stores (Amazon Go – the company's first brick-and mortar grocery store). We expect online retail sales to decelerate while the overall retail market still holds a lot of potential. So, moves like these will help Amazon tap a large number of customers who prefer to shop offline, while not doing away with the online business.
- ▲ Amazon is the leading provider of cloud infrastructure as a service to enterprise customers. The expanding customer base of **Amazon Web Services (AWS)** driven by its strengthening cloud offerings will continue to aid Amazon's dominance in the global cloud space. Even more encouraging is the fact that AWS generates much stronger margins than the traditional retail business, which should remain a positive for the company's profitability as it continues to grow in the mix. AWS is gaining momentum with customers including Western Union, Klarna, Old Mutual, Seattle Seahawks, FINRA CAT, Emirates NBD, Adobe, National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing, GE Oil & Gas, Kellogg's, Airbnb, hilips, Pinterest, Spotify, Tata Motors, Unilever, McDonalds and BMW, to name a few.
- ▲ Amazon is pushing well with its **devices strategy**. Alexa powered Echo devices are going great guns and help the company sell products and services. Artificial intelligence (AI) driven Alexa has already been integrated into a host of everyday devices for the digital home, which has converted the nascent smart home market into a potential area of growth in a very short time. Moreover, the company is benefiting from increasing number of Alexa compatible smart devices. The company is racing to build an ecosystem around Alexa and it's safe to say that it has taken an early lead over Google's smart assistant and Microsoft's Cortana.
- ▲ Amazon is gradually choosing the **buy option over build**, which, along with the other positives, ensures that the company generates revenues right way without wasting any time in building its own infrastructure. The company's acquisition of a Dubai-based e-commerce giant, Souq.com. is helping it to strengthen presence in countries like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE markets like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. Amazon's retail market share is still relatively small in these markets, but there is a good possibility of an increase in the next few years. If this happens, the company will see additional several billion dollars a year in revenues. The company acquired natural and organic foods supermarket, Whole Foods Market for \$13.7 billion. Through this acquisition, the company is gaining traction across a large customer base that still prefers to shop at physical stores. This is Amazon's way of tackling mounting competition and slow growth in the e-commerce space. Amazon has also acquired Body Labs, a startup that develops AI, computer vision and body-modelling based 3D body shapes and motion for various industries. It also acquired GameSparks to spruce up its gaming capabilities.
- ▲ Amazon has a solid balance sheet that makes the stock attractive to investors. As of Jun 30, 2020, the company's net cash amounted to \$4.3 billion compared with \$3.8 billion as of Mar 31, 2020. Further, debt-to-total capital was 31% as of Jun 30, 2020 compared to 26.4% as of Mar 31, 2020. Although increasing net debt-to-capital ratio raises risk, we note that the company has no short-term debt currently. Additionally, strong cash flow generation is bolstering the company's liquidity position. Notably, Amazon generated \$20.6 billion of cash from operations in the second quarter, which increased significantly from \$3.1 billion in the prior quarter.

Amazon is benefiting from its Prime program, delivery and logistic system in the e-commerce space. Further, its dominant position in cloud market is a positive.

Reasons To Sell:

- ▼ There is a downside to a growing international business in the current economic environment. While expansion opportunities automatically increase, **currency** also starts playing a bigger role. Currency continues to have a significantly negative impact on its e-commerce results, which is now being offset by strength in AWS. Since the dollar remains strong at the moment and the situation may not change much for the rest of the year as well, there will be pressure on Amazon's profitability. The risk should be hedged however as AWS increases in the mix. AWS revenues are dollar-denominated while a lot of the assets were located in low-cost regions meaning that reduced competitiveness from the rising dollar would potentially be compensated by lower costs. Also note that once companies have migrated to its AWS platform, it will be difficult to switch or stop using it, leading to a situation of relatively inelastic demand.
- ▼ The AWS business is bringing an **element of cyclicality** into the business. Generally, a capital-intensive business means that the company will have to periodically sacrifice profits to build out infrastructure and then wait for customers to fill up the capacity thus created. So there will be periods during which the company will build out at the cost of profits and cash flows followed by periods during which the increased operating leverage will translate into improved profitability. AWS is still a small percentage of Amazon's total business, but still has a significant impact on its profitability because of the low-margin profile of the retail business. As AWS grows as a percentage of sales, it will become a greater influence on profitability.
- ▼ **Prime's saturation in the U.S. market** is apparent, because Amazon has very high penetration rates in the country. This led management to announce a tiered pricing system, wherein users can try out a monthly subscription if they are unsure about the program or don't want to pay upfront for the whole year. This plan brings flexibility to the pricing system, so is likely to remain. It should also increase penetration amongst the less affluent households.
- ▼ The **competition in online retail** is heating up. Traditional retailers have always provided the strongest competition and a number of them are running e-commerce sites as well. Additionally, the increased use of the Internet in both developed and developing economies is attracting other players into the space. Affiliation programs are being used by big players such as eBay. Several smaller companies could also find their own niche. While the Chinese market appears ripe and Amazon has initiatives to increase penetration in the market, local company Alibaba.com is very well-entrenched there. In China, Amazon has to contend with not only Alibaba, but also a growing number of other home-grown players. Additionally, Alibaba is now targeting the American market, which will greatly increase competition for Amazon. Further, since Amazon's first mover advantage is likely to moderate over time, some market share erosion seems inevitable.
- ▼ Amazon continues to **invest heavily on fulfillment centers, TV shows and movies, grocery, AWS, India expansion** and what not. In India, the company is making massive investments to build a logistics network that would cover the entire country. The \$5 billion investment plan is well on track but at the cost of global margins. Management has indicated that Amazon will continue with its push into the Indian e-commerce market, making the nation its fifth largest market after the U.S., the U.K. Japan and Germany. That being said, Amazon's global margins are likely to be under pressure at least for a few years in the future.
- ▼ Most retail businesses tend to be **seasonal** and Amazon's is no different. The company's revenues get a huge boost from the holiday season each year. Over 31% of its 2019 revenues were generated in the fourth quarter of 2019. With such a huge contribution from the fourth quarter, there is an obvious drop-off in the first quarter. The dependence on consumer spending makes the business lumpy, increasing the possibility of expectations going awry. However, management usually provides a fairly conservative guidance and reported revenues are usually within the guided range.

Amazon's rising operating expenses to support expansion of business into new markets and territories, and grow its volume of content remain major concerns.

Last Earnings Report

Amazon's Q2 Earnings & Revenues Beat Estimates

Amazon.com reported second-quarter 2020 earnings of \$10.30 per share, beating the Zacks Consensus Estimate of \$1.74 per share by 491.9%. The bottom line also improved 97.3% from the year-ago quarter and 105.6% from the previous quarter.

Net sales of \$88.9 billion comfortably surpassed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of \$81.6 billion and exceeded management's guided range of \$75 billion and \$81 billion. Further, the figure increased 40.2% on a year-over-year basis and 17.8% sequentially.

North America revenues (62.3% of sales) advanced 43.4% from the year-ago quarter to \$55.4 billion. International revenues (25.5% of sales) climbed 38.5% year over year to \$22.7 billion. Amazon Web Services (AWS) revenues (12.2% of sales) surged 29% year over year to \$10.8 billion.

The top line was driven by strong growth in the online stores sales in the coronavirus-hit second quarter. The company witnessed 49% growth in the online stores from the prior-year quarter. Further, strong momentum across online grocery shopping contributed to the performance.

Additionally, strengthening relationship with third-party sellers remained a major positive. Notably, sales generated by these sellers rose 53% on a year-over-year basis. Further, strong performance delivered by subscription services, which exhibited an improvement of 30% year over year, contributed to the top line.

The company generated strong profits in the reported quarter despite spending heavily in order to manage the unprecedented situation induced by coronavirus.

As announced during the first-quarter earnings call, the company spent over \$4 billion during the second quarter to protect its workforce from COVID-19 and speed up delivery time during this pandemic situation.

Nevertheless, the company generated \$5.2 billion worth net income in the second quarter.

Solid customer demand, strong Amazon Web Services (AWS) momentum, expanding smart devices portfolio and robust Prime member engagement remained major tailwinds. The company experience solid Prime subscription renewal rates during the reported quarter. Additionally, robust grocery sales, which tripled compared with the year-ago quarter, were noteworthy.

Amazon's strong global presence remains a major positive. Additionally, growing Prime and AWS momentum, strengthening Alexa skills and expanding smart devices portfolio and growing efforts toward gaining strong traction among small and medium businesses are likely to drive the company's business in the near term.

Prime Momentum

Amazon Prime momentum continued to benefit the company during the reported quarter on the back of robust grocery services and customer-oriented benefits despite coronavirus-induced disruptions.

The company expanded grocery delivery capacity by 160% in the second quarter, which helped it in gaining strong momentum in online grocery shopping.

Apart from retail benefits, expanding original content and overall content portfolio on Prime Video drove the company's momentum across the Prime subscribers.

Further, Prime Video premiered original series namely *Upload*, Season 2 of *Homecoming* and Season 6 of *Bosch* during the reported quarter. Further, it premiered a docuseries called *Regular Heroes* based on COVID-19 scenario.

Additionally, Amazon expanded its movie portfolio by streaming *Selah and the Spades*, *The Goldfinch*, *The Vast of Night*, *7500*, and *My Spy* during the reported quarter. Further, it strengthened its Indian movie content portfolio by streaming *Ponmagal Vandhal* and *Gulabo Sitabo*.

Furthermore, the launch of Watch Parties feature and Prime Video Profiles was a positive.

Expanding AWS Portfolio: A Key Catalyst

AWS that witnessed significant improvement in the topline, continued to gain strong momentum across several government authorities, health organizations, apex bodies and companies during the coronavirus-hit second quarter courtesy of its highly reliable services portfolio.

During the to-be-reported quarter, Amazon Web Services (AWS) introduced Amazon Honeycode, which is a fully managed service that is ideal for seamless creation of interactive web and mobile applications.

Further, AWS made its three new sixth generation Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (Amazon EC2) instances namely M6g, C6g and R6g generally available. Additionally, the company has made AWS Snowcone, Amazon Kendra, UltraWarm for Amazon Elasticsearch Service and Amazon CodeGuru generally available during the second quarter.

Further, the company entered into a multi-year agreement with Slack Technologies in the second quarter to offer integrated enterprise software tools.

Quarter Ending	06/2020
Report Date	Jul 30, 2020
Sales Surprise	9.02%
EPS Surprise	491.95%
Quarterly EPS	10.30
Annual EPS (TTM)	26.01

With the aid of expanding services portfolio, AWS gained strong traction among new customers including IHS Markit, Capella Space and Genesys during the reported quarter.

Further, the company witnessed solid momentum across its sports customers like Bundesliga and Formula 1 in the quarter under review.

Alexa & Expanding Smart Devices Offering

Amazon continued to enhance skills and features of Alexa during the reported quarter. Advanced features that include setting of reminders across all Alexa devices, nutrition tips, new notification capabilities with Routines and announcements on smartphones as push notification were added.

Additionally, strengthening international footprint of Alexa Skill Blueprints, which are now available in France, Italy, Mexico, and Spain, remained a tailwind.

Moreover, expanding international availability of the Echo Devices remained positive. The company made Echo Auto available in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the U.K. It also made Echo Dot with clock and Echo Studio available in Brazil.

Also, the company made eero mesh WiFi systems available in Australia and Mexico. Furthermore, Amazon unveiled next-generation original Ring Video Doorbell and made Ring Alarm available in Germany, Norway and Sweden during the reported quarter, which expanded its smart doorbell offering.

Quarter Details

Product sales (56.5% of sales) increased 40.1% year over year to \$50.2 billion. Service sales (43.5% of sales) surged 40.4% from the year-ago quarter to \$38.7 billion.

Operating expenses were \$83.1 billion, up 37.7% from the year-ago quarter. As percentage of revenues, the figure contracted 170 bps on a year-over-year basis to 93.4%.

Cost of sales, fulfillment, technology & content, marketing, and general & administrative increased 44.9%, 48.9%, 14.6%, 1.3% and 24.4% to \$52.7 billion, \$13.8 billion, \$10.4 billion, \$4.3 billion and \$1.6 billion, respectively, on a year-over-year basis.

Other operating expenses were \$290 million during the second quarter compared with \$86 million in the year-ago quarter.

Operating income increased 89.5% from the year-ago quarter to \$5.8 billion. Further, operating margin expanded 170 bps from the year-ago quarter to 6.6%.

Operating income for AWS was \$3.6 billion, up 58.3% year over year. Further, the same for North America improved 36.9% from the prior-year quarter to \$2.1 billion.

Further, International segment reported operating income of \$345 million against a loss of \$601 million in the year-ago quarter.

Balance Sheet & Cash Flow

As of Jun 30, 2020, cash and cash equivalents were \$37.5 billion compared with \$27.2 billion as of Mar 31, 2020. Further, marketable securities totalled \$33.9 billion at the end of the second quarter, up from \$22.1 billion at the end of the first quarter.

Long-term debt was \$33.1 billion in the reported quarter compared with \$23.4 billion in the previous quarter.

Further, the company generated \$20.6 billion of cash from operation in the second quarter, which increased significantly from \$3.1 billion in the prior quarter.

Guidance

For third-quarter 2020, Amazon expects net sales between \$87 billion and \$93 billion. The figure is anticipated to improve in the range of 24-33% on a year-over-year basis.

Management projects an unfavorable foreign exchange impact of approximately 20 bps.

Proceeds from operational activities are likely to range from operating income of \$2 billion to \$5 billion. Notably, the company reported an operating income of \$3.2 billion in the year-ago quarter. This guidance is inclusive of more than \$2 billion costs related to COVID-19.

Recent News

On **Sep 2, 2020**, Amazon rolled out two new wireless smart home security cameras namely Blink Outdoor and Blink Indoor. This expands its family of Blink wireless security camera.

On **Sep 2, 2020**, Amazon's cloud clientele strengthened with Weta Digital which went all-in on AWS.

On **Aug 25, 2020**, Amazon's AWS made io2 for Amazon Elastic Block Store (Amazon EBS) generally available. Notably, io2 is an advanced provisioned input/output operations per second (IOPS) SSD volume, which expands the volume offerings of Amazon EBS that already provides four different types of volumes.

On **Aug 13, 2020**, Amazon announced plans to open its first fulfillment center in Forney, Texas. The facility is expected to create over 500 new full-time jobs with industry-leading pay and comprehensive benefits.

On **Jul 15, 2020**, Amazon's AWS made its fully-managed service — Amazon Interactive Video Service (Amazon IVS) — generally available in a bid to expand presence in the live video streaming field.

On **Jul 9, 2020**, Amazon's AWS made its new service namely AWS IoT SiteWise generally available. With this service, AWS strives to address the time and cost challenges in extracting data from several sensors and equipment across various locations.

On **Jun 23, 2020**, Amazon revealed about its latest \$2 billion investment in its Climate Pledge Fund for the development of environment-friendly technologies and services in order to achieve its carbon neutrality goal.

On **Jun 4, 2020**, Amazon's AWS joined forces with Slack Technologies in a bid to aid the management of AWS resources of distributed development teams from inside Slac, thus offering enhanced enterprise workforce collaboration.

On **Jun 3, 2020**, Amazon extended its partnership with Air Transport Services Group to lease 12 additional Boeing 767-300 converted cargo aircraft in a bid to expand its air fleet operation.

On **May 26, 2020**, Amazon's AWS client Bundesliga — the professional association football (soccer) league of Germany — that went all-in on AWS in the beginning of 2019 debuted its first two Match Facts namely Average Positions and Expected Goals (xGoals).

On **May 21, 2020**, Amazon revealed about its five new renewable projects which are utility-scale solar projects in nature. Notably, these projects will be based in the United States, China and Australia which are equipped with a total of 615 megawatt (MW), will generate around 1.2 million megawatt hours (MWh).

On **May 19, 2020**, Amazon's AWS was selected by Lyell Immunopharma as the standard for machine learning workloads. Notably, Lyell has gone all-in on AWS.

On **May 12, 2020**, Amazon's cloud computing platform AWS made machine learning backed enterprise search service namely Amazon Kendra available to the customers. Notably, the service allows businesses to search internal documents across portals and wikis and get precise answers to natural language queries.

On **May 7, 2020**, Amazon announced the premiere of original series namely Regular Heroes. The eight-episode docuseries which focuses on the front-lines of COVID-19 has already premiered in the U.S., U.K., Canada and Australia on May 8. It will be premiered in other countries on May 12.

On **May 6, 2020**, Amazon's cloud computing platform AWS made its new, highly performant, fully managed, low-cost warm storage tier called UltraWarm for Amazon Elasticsearch Service to its customers. The company strives to offer a warm storage tier that stores large amounts of data cost-effectively to the Elasticsearch customers.

On **Apr 28, 2020**, Amazon launched the AWS Europe (Milan) Region which marks as the sixth AWS Region in Europe. The company has currently 76 Availability Zones within 24 geographic regions across the world. Further, Amazon has announced its plans for nine more Availability Zones and three more AWS Regions in Indonesia, Japan, and Spain.

Valuation

Amazon shares are up 73.7% in the year-to-date period and 74.4% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry and the Zacks Retail-Wholesale sector are up 64.6% and 34.6% in the year-to-date period, respectively. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry and the sector are up 74.1% and 39.8%, respectively.

The S&P 500 index is up 3.1% in the year-to-date period and 11.8% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 4.1X forward 12-month sales, which compares to 4.84X for the Zacks sub-industry, 1.3X for the Zacks sector and 4.24X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 4.31X and as low as 1.72X, with a 5-year median of 2.69X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in-line with the market. Our \$3,536 price target reflects 4.3X forward 12-month sales.

The table below shows summary valuation data for AMZN

Valuation Multiples - AMZN					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/S F12M	Current	4.1	4.84	1.3	4.24
	5-Year High	4.31	6	1.3	4.24
	5-Year Low	1.72	3.17	0.82	2.53
	5-Year Median	2.69	4.72	0.99	3.07
P/B TTM	Current	22.88	9	6.18	4.5
	5-Year High	28.43	11.22	6.42	4.76
	5-Year Low	13.45	4.9	3.7	2.83
	5-Year Median	20.53	7.97	5.04	3.76
EV/Sales TTM	Current	5.12	6.85	1.54	3.23
	5-Year High	5.38	8.53	1.6	3.44
	5-Year Low	2	3.94	0.9	2.11
	5-Year Median	3.26	6.22	1.16	2.86

As of 09/03/2020

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Top 27% (69 out of 251)



Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Target Corporation (TGT)	Outperform	1
Alibaba Group Holding Limited (BABA)	Neutral	3
eBay Inc. (EBAY)	Neutral	3
Facebook, Inc. (FB)	Neutral	2
Alphabet Inc. (GOOGL)	Neutral	3
The Kroger Co. (KR)	Neutral	2
Microsoft Corporation (MSFT)	Neutral	3
Walmart Inc. (WMT)	Neutral	3

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

Industry Comparison Industry: Internet - Commerce				Industry Peers		
	AMZN	X Industry	S&P 500	GOOGL	MSFT	WMT
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	3	3	3
VGM Score	A	-	-	B	B	A
Market Cap	1,687.00 B	3.61 B	23.52 B	1,108.33 B	1,644.45 B	409.59 B
# of Analysts	14	3	14	12	13	15
Dividend Yield	0.00%	0.00%	1.62%	0.00%	0.94%	1.49%
Value Score	D	-	-	C	D	B
Cash/Price	0.04	0.10	0.07	0.11	0.08	0.04
EV/EBITDA	44.13	8.13	13.12	19.28	22.91	13.01
PEG F1	3.12	3.49	2.97	2.23	2.48	4.88
P/B	22.88	5.77	3.20	5.35	13.90	5.04
P/CF	50.23	21.24	12.72	23.46	28.81	16.32
P/E F1	102.96	52.23	21.67	36.42	33.97	27.48
P/S TTM	5.24	2.50	2.49	6.68	11.50	0.76
Earnings Yield	0.95%	0.64%	4.40%	2.75%	2.95%	3.64%
Debt/Equity	0.45	0.13	0.70	0.02	0.50	0.56
Cash Flow (\$/share)	67.05	0.47	6.93	69.45	7.54	8.85
Growth Score	A	-	-	B	A	A
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	97.34%	7.86%	10.41%	22.11%	19.44%	2.80%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	39.06%	8.42%	-4.75%	-9.00%	11.07%	6.69%
Current Cash Flow Growth	31.33%	1.34%	5.22%	12.62%	17.66%	-0.12%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	49.26%	11.28%	8.49%	19.91%	10.19%	-0.31%
Current Ratio	1.18	1.65	1.35	3.41	2.52	0.79
Debt/Capital	31.00%	27.43%	42.95%	1.90%	33.49%	35.98%
Net Margin	4.10%	-3.15%	10.25%	18.99%	30.96%	3.30%
Return on Equity	20.47%	5.30%	14.59%	15.62%	39.45%	19.13%
Sales/Assets	1.42	1.31	0.50	0.61	0.50	2.29
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	31.31%	0.00%	-1.42%	7.51%	8.57%	4.96%
Momentum Score	A	-	-	C	B	D
Daily Price Change	-4.63%	-4.06%	-2.14%	-5.12%	-6.19%	-2.13%
1-Week Price Change	3.56%	2.64%	2.59%	4.05%	7.46%	6.59%
4-Week Price Change	4.43%	-0.01%	2.25%	8.28%	0.44%	11.74%
12-Week Price Change	31.67%	28.00%	11.04%	16.24%	16.66%	20.36%
52-Week Price Change	82.97%	50.33%	2.01%	34.43%	55.16%	25.21%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	4,072,822	296,808	1,827,096	1,513,487	31,047,424	13,727,686
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	0.00%	6.72%	0.00%	0.00%	0.08%	6.69%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	61.80%	17.65%	3.89%	7.88%	2.82%	6.63%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	0.00%	13.13%	0.00%	0.00%	0.01%	2.97%

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Zacks Stock Rating System

We offer two rating systems that take into account investors' holding horizons: Zacks Rank and Zacks Recommendation. Each provides valuable insights into the future profitability of the stock and can be used separately or in combination with each other depending on your investment style.

Zacks Recommendation

The Zacks Recommendation aims to predict performance over the next 6 to 12 months. The foundation for the quantitatively determined Zacks Recommendation is trends in the company's estimate revisions and earnings outlook. The Zacks Recommendation is broken down into 3 Levels; Outperform, Neutral and Underperform. Unlike many Wall Street firms, we maintain a balance between the number of Outperform and Neutral recommendations. Our team of 70 analysts are fully versed in the benefits of earnings estimate revisions and how that is harnessed through the Zacks quantitative rating system. But we have given our analysts the ability to override the Zacks Recommendation for the 1200 stocks that they follow. The reason for the analyst over-rides is that there are often factors such as valuation, industry conditions and management effectiveness that a trained investment professional can spot better than a quantitative model.

Zacks Rank

The Zacks Rank is our short-term rating system that is most effective over the one- to three-month holding horizon. The underlying driver for the quantitatively-determined Zacks Rank is the same as the Zacks Recommendation, and reflects trends in earnings estimate revisions.

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	A
Momentum Score	A
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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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 medium-term 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 most recent 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.