

Baxter International (BAX)

\$78.85 (As of 10/08/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$67.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

Zacks Recommendation: Underperform
(Since: 08/03/20)

Prior Recommendation: Neutral

Short Term: 1-3 Months

Zacks Rank: (1-5) **4-Sell**
Zacks Style Scores: VGM:B
Value: C | Growth: C | Momentum: A

Summary

Baxter saw weak performance across Medication Delivery, Pharmaceuticals and Advanced Surgery segments is a dampener. Also, margin contraction raises concern. Further, cut-throat competition in the MedTech markets remains a woe. Further, the company anticipates incurring around \$150 million in incremental expenses owing to its efforts to address the pandemic in 2020. The company underperformed the industry year to date. However, Baxter ended second-quarter 2020 on a strong note, with both earnings and revenues beating the Zacks Consensus Estimate. Baxter witnessed solid performance across Renal Care, Clinical Nutrition, Acute Therapies and Other segments. Its surgical portfolio is anticipated to generate huge profits on the back of products including FLOSEAL Hemostatic Matrix and TISSEEL Fibrin Sealant.

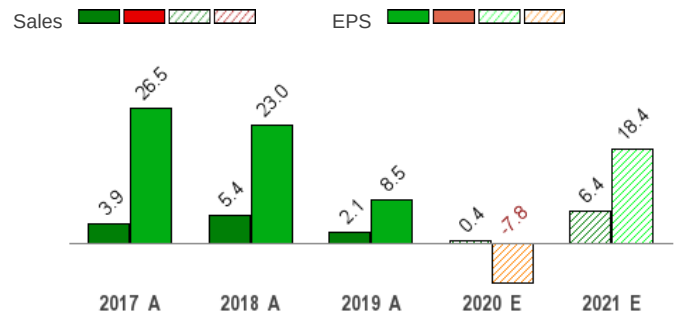
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	\$95.19 - \$69.10
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	2,817,055
Market Cap	\$39.9 B
Year-To-Date Price Change	-5.7%
Beta	0.77
Dividend / Dividend Yield	\$0.98 / 1.2%
Industry	Medical - Products
Zacks Industry Rank	Bottom 49% (128 out of 252)

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	-9.9%
Last Sales Surprise	-5.3%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	0.0%
Expected Report Date	10/29/2020
Earnings ESP	0.0%

Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	2,908 E	2,993 E	3,020 E	3,228 E	12,134 E
2020	2,802 A	2,718 A	2,825 E	3,049 E	11,405 E
2019	2,632 A	2,840 A		3,039 A	11,362 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	\$0.81 E	\$0.86 E	\$0.91 E	\$1.00 E	\$3.61 E
2020	\$0.82 A	\$0.64 A	\$0.72 E	\$0.87 E	\$3.05 E
2019	\$0.76 A	\$0.89 A		\$0.97 A	\$3.31 A

*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

P/E TTM	NA
P/E F1	25.9
PEG F1	2.0
P/S TTM	3.5

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and Sales estimates, is as of 10/08/2020. The reports text is as of 10/09/2020.

Overview

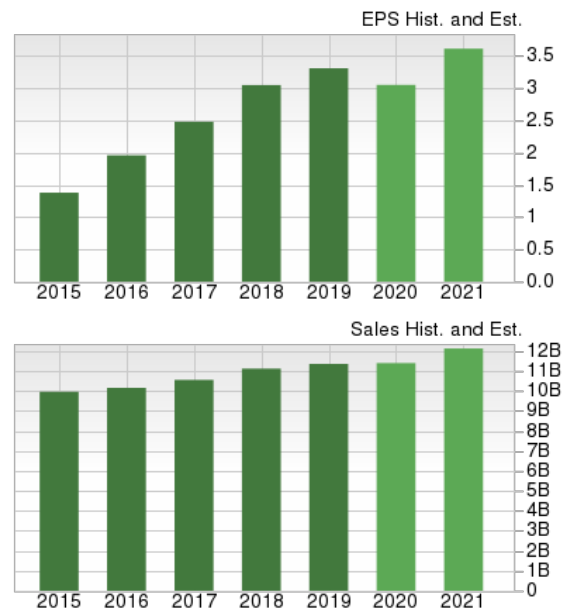
Headquartered in Deerfield, IL, Baxter International Inc. (BAX) is a global medical technology company. However, the company spun off its biopharmaceuticals segment into an independent entity – Baxalta Inc. Following the spinoff, the company consists of renal and hospital products, providing items such as kidney-dialysis equipment, infusion pumps, and intravenous (IV) solutions.

Baxter has been reporting through six revenue segments.

- Renal Care (32.9% of net sales in 2018)
- Medication Delivery (24%)
- Pharmaceuticals (18.8%)
- Clinical Nutrition (7.9%)
- Advanced Surgery (7.2%)
- Acute Therapies (4.6%)
- Other (4.6%)

Baxter's Renal segment primarily consists of Peritoneal Dialysis (PD) and Hemodialysis (HD) therapies. The portfolio addresses the needs of patients with kidney failure or kidney disease, and their healthcare providers, with a comprehensive range of therapeutic options across home, in-center, and hospital settings for better individualized care. Pharmacy Solutions (IPS) mainly includes premixed and oncology drug platforms, nutrition products and pharmacy compounding services. Cyclophosphamide is a part of this division. Surgical Care includes inhaled anesthesia products as well as biological products and medical devices used in surgical procedures for hemostasis, tissue sealing and adhesion prevention. Other segment primarily generates revenues from the company's pharmaceutical partnering business.

2019 at a Glance: Baxter reported net revenues of \$11.36 billion in 2019, up 2.4% year over year on a reported basis. Adjusted earnings of \$3.31 per share, improved 13.7% year over year.



Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Sell:

- ▼ **Shares Down:** Year-to-date, shares of Baxter have lost 4.9% against the industry's rise of 0.2%. Baxter saw weak performance across Medication Delivery, Pharmaceuticals and Advanced Surgery segments is a dampener. Further, cut-throat competition in the MedTech markets remains a woe
- ▼ **Generic Competition for Cyclophosphamide:** Cyclophosphamide is a part of Baxter's Hospital Products segment. However, Baxter's cyclophosphamide performance over the last five years has lacked luster for the most part. Lower cyclophosphamide sales pose threats to the Integrated Pharmacy Solutions franchise business. Despite a promising portfolio, the company has failed to grab market share and substantially grow its top line, thanks to generic competition for cyclophosphamide.
- ▼ **Sluggish Macro-environment:** Baxter depends on the European Union for about a third of its sales. This is a cause for concern, given the sluggish macro-environment, a glum outlook for hospital spending and tightening of reimbursement. The outlook also remains slightly uneasy in the U.S., where demand for many health care products is soft with an expectation of further price cuts on account of health care reforms.
- ▼ **Cutthroat Competition in Renal Care Market:** Increase in prevalence of renal diseases and a huge diabetic and obese population is responsible for the growth of renal dialysis market in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. Notably, Middle East and Africa has the least share in the renal dialysis market. Per a report by Global Market Insights, the Global Renal Dialysis market is expected to exceed US\$ 104 billion by end of 2024.

Cutthroat competition in the Renal Care Market is likely to dent Baxter's margins. The company faces aggressive rivalry from MedTech behemoths like Fresenius Medical Care, DaVita Healthcare Partners Inc. and more.

Generic competition for Cyclophosphamide, and lackluster sales in a few sub-segments are key concerns.

Risks

- **Acute Therapies Profile:** Baxter's performance in acute therapies has been continued to be driven by improving utilization for CRRT globally, and increased demand for multi-organ support products. In acute therapies, Baxter launched the first 3-in-1 oXIRIS set for continuous renal replacement therapy and sepsis management protocols. This adds to Baxter's multi-organ therapy offering, utilizing the Prismaflex system. Prismaflex is available in the intensive care units in more than 20 countries across Europe and Asia-Pacific. Per management, the company plans to bring additional markets on board through 2020.

The company has been witnessing tremendous demand for many products, which includes its PrisMax and PRISMAFLEX, continuous renal replacement therapy, devices and associated consumables. The company's MINI-BAG Plus drug delivery system, the Spectrum IQ infusion system in SAS, plus IV Solutions parenteral nutrition therapies and injectable drugs are in great demand as well.

Per the second-quarter results, revenues in Acute Therapies business were \$186 million, reflecting growth of 40.9% on a reported basis and 45% on a constant currency (cc) basis. Per management, increased demand for acute therapies products due to the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the improvement.

- **Baxter – a Leading Player in Renal-Care Space:** Baxter provides renal care services across Asia, Europe and Latin America. For more than 60 years, Baxter has been a leading provider for HD and PD. New therapies like expanded hemodialysis (HDx) and remote patient management has fortified the company's position in the renal care space.

The renal care products include AMIA Automated PD System with SHARESOURCE Remote Patient Management System, SHARESOURCE Remote Patient Management System, BICART Cartridge, Cartridge Blood Set, DIACLEAR Ultrafilter, DIASCAN Monitoring System, EXELTRA Dialyzer High-Flux, Single-Use Dialyzers, PD Simple Paks, POLYFLUX 6H Dialyzer and others. All these products enjoy high demand and have been significantly contributing to the company's top line in the past several quarters.

Baxter anticipates strong growth in global demand for continuous renal replacement therapies. In the first quarter, revenues in Renal Care business were \$870 million that increased 1.9% from the prior-year quarter and rose 4% at cc. High-single-digit growth in PD therapies globally contributed to the improvement. Also, due to the travel restrictions related to the outbreak in China, the company estimated that the need to expedite the delivery of monthly therapy supplies to PD patients contributed \$5-\$10 million in sales in the quarter.

- **Baxter's Surgical Portfolio Holds Promise:** Baxter's surgical portfolio includes products like FLOSEAL Hemostatic Matrix, TISSEEL Fibrin Sealant, COSEAL Surgical Sealant and VASCU-GUARD Patch among others. The portfolio is composed of hemostasis (addressing bleeding), tissue sealing and hard tissue regeneration as well as soft tissue repair and microsurgery with products available in nearly 60 countries. Introduction of Peri-Strips Dry stapler and Tisseel Prima are likely to boost Baxter's surgical portfolio.

Baxter expects a persistent negative impact on business growth associated with declines in elective surgeries globally. In fact, in the second quarter, revenues at the segment totaled \$168 million, down 27.3% from the year-ago quarter and 27% at cc. The Seprafilam buyout in February, contributed \$23 million to sales in the second quarter. Declines in elective surgical procedures resulted in an estimated negative impact of around \$80 million for the Advanced Surgery portfolio.

- **Strategic Collaboration with Mayo Clinic:** In 2018, in a bid to develop a renal care center in the United States, Baxter and Mayo Clinic had inked a collaboration agreement. The companies formed an outpatient clinic for chronic kidney disease management, home dialysis and in-center dialysis services. The renal care center will be established at the Mayo Clinic Dialysis Center in Jacksonville, FL. The collaboration will integrate Baxter Renal Care Services' proven clinical service model and CKD management program with Mayo Clinic's recognized excellence in care.

For investors' notice, the collaboration is the first initiative from the Baxter and Mayo Clinic five-year agreement that was announced earlier in 2017. Per the agreement, researchers and clinicians of the companies will work toward the treatment of kidney diseases, with additional projects planned in other areas. The collaboration focuses on new research and developments to bring innovation across different therapeutic areas. The agreement has been signed for a five-year period, with a five-year renewal option.

- **Positive Tidings on Regulatory Front:** Baxter has been witnessing positive tidings on the regulatory front.

In January, Baxter announced the enrollment of the first group of patients under a U.S. clinical trial for the company's flagship peritoneal dialysis (PD) solution generation system. Notably, the FDA has also approved the trial. For investors' notice, the system is not yet available for use by patients.

In the first quarter of 2020, the company received the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the FDA for the Oxiris filter set, which is the only filter set available in the United States to lower pro-inflammatory cytokine levels in the blood for confirmed COVID-19 cases with confirmed or imminent respiratory failure that require blood purification.

In recent times, the company received CE mark for the Evo IQ Infusion System in the United Kingdom and Ireland, representing the first in a series of planned regulatory submissions for the Evo IQ system. Additionally, in the second quarter, Baxter announced CE marking in Europe and regulatory approval from Australia's Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for the Evo IQ Syringe Infusion System. This can be utilized to deliver small volumes of medications and other fluids to patients in a controlled manner. The device is part of the broader Evo IQ Infusion Platform and is supported by Baxter's web-based Dose IQ Safety Software and wireless IQ Enterprise Connectivity Suite.

Further, during the second quarter Baxter received FDA clearance of Altapore Shape Bioactive Bone Graft, which is the latest addition to its next-generation bone graft substitute product line.

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- **Solid Global Foothold:** Baxter has a strong presence in foreign markets which makes international diversification a core component of the company's strategy.

In the second quarter, in APAC, revenues of \$580 million improved 1.2% from the prior-year quarter and 5% at cc. However, in Americas, Baxter reported revenues of \$1.41 billion, down 7.4% on a year-over-year basis and 5% at cc. In EMEA, revenues totaled \$731 million, down 1.5% from the year-ago quarter but up 1% at cc. This was primarily due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in substantially lower rates of hospital admissions and a reduction in elective procedures. Nonetheless, Baxter's wide geographic footprint reflects balance and stability, thereby enabling it in combating risks stemming from overexposure to a more limited range of geographies.

- **Strong Product Portfolio:** Baxter has an impressive product portfolio with improved existing products and new product development. Management has announced plans of introducing therapies and products, which are expected to contribute approximately \$1.7 billion to sales by 2023.

During first-quarter 2020, Baxter entered a partnership with MedAware — a specialist in clinical big-data analytics and machine learning algorithms that provides artificial intelligence (AI)-based safety software for identifying medication-related errors. The partnership is likely to aid Baxter's development of next-generation infusion pump dose error reduction software for direct integration into Baxter's infusion pumps and hospital enterprise connectivity solution. The company also introduced a new generation of Peri-Strips Dry with Veritas Collagen Matrix (PSDV) surgical product, known as PSDV with Secure Grip in the quarter. Moreover, during the first quarter of 2020, Baxter acquired toSense, a California-based technology company, which is likely to be crucial to Baxter's development and launch of leading-edge monitoring innovations.

Additionally, the company expanded its injectable pharmaceuticals portfolio with the U.S. launch of Myxredlin (Insulin Human in 0.9% Sodium Chloride Injection), the first and only ready-to-use insulin for IV infusion in the hospital and other acute care settings. The company also introduced a ready-to-use eptifibatide, a first-of-its-kind premix presentation of a platelet aggregation inhibitor that prevents platelets from sticking together and clotting.

Further, the company initiated collaboration with bioMerieux, a world leader in the field of in vitro diagnostics, to create future biomarkers with the target of quickly detecting and informing treatment of acute kidney injury (AKI). The efforts are meant to help diagnose AKI earlier so a patient can have improved therapy options, indicating Baxter's growth strategy of addressing patient needs across the continuum of care.

Going forward, the company's additional pipeline highlights comprise Novum IQ Smart Pump Technology, Share Source Analytics and additional differentiated generic injectables.

- **Stable Liquidity Position:** Baxter is well capitalized having exited second-quarter 2020 with cash and cash equivalents of \$4.09 billion, down from \$4.11 billion on a sequential basis. The company's cash flow trends also remain robust. Cumulative operating cash flow from continuing operations in the second quarter was \$646 million, up from \$574 million in the year-ago period. Meanwhile, long-term debt came was \$6.54 billion in the second quarter, slightly higher than \$6.48 billion, sequentially. Although the quarter's long-term debt was much higher than the corresponding cash and cash equivalent level, the company's current-year debt of \$319 million (down from \$536 million on sequential basis) is much lower than the cash level. This is good news in terms of the company's solvency level as, at least during the year of economic downturn. Moreover, per management, the cash level at the end of the second quarter is sufficient to fund the company's operations and strategically execute on its capital allocation priorities.
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Last Earnings Report

Baxter Earnings and Revenues Miss Estimates in Q2

Baxter International Inc. reported second-quarter 2020 adjusted earnings of 64 cents per share, which missed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of 71 cents by 9.9%. Moreover, the bottom line declined 23.8% from the year-ago quarter.

Revenues of \$2.72 billion lagged the Zacks Consensus Estimate of \$2.87 billion by 5.2%. The top line decreased 4.1% year over year on a reported basis, while 1% and 2% on a constant currency (cc) and operational basis, respectively.

Quarter Ending 06/2020

Report Date	Jul 30, 2020
Sales Surprise	-5.25%
EPS Surprise	-9.86%
Quarterly EPS	0.64
Annual EPS (TTM)	NA

Geographical Details

Baxter reports operating results through three geographic segments — Americas (North and South America), EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) and APAC (Asia Pacific).

In Americas, Baxter reported revenues of \$1.41 billion, down 7.4% on a year-over-year basis and 5% at cc.

In EMEA, revenues totaled \$731 million, down 1.5% from the year-ago quarter but up 1% at cc.

In APAC, revenues of \$580 million improved 1.2% from the prior-year quarter and 5% at cc.

Segmental Details

Renal Care

This segment reported revenues of \$919 million in the quarter under review, up 1.3% year over year. Revenues at the segment increased 5% at cc.

Medication Delivery

Revenues at the segment amounted to \$612 million, down 11.2% from the year-ago quarter and 9% at cc.

Pharmaceuticals

Revenues at the segment totaled \$485 million, down 9.9% from the year-ago quarter and 7% at cc.

Clinical Nutrition

Revenues at the segment were \$219 million, up 1.9% from the year-ago quarter and 5% at cc.

Advanced Surgery

Revenues at the segment totaled \$168 million, down 27.3% from the year-ago quarter and 27% at cc.

Acute Therapies

This segment reported revenues of \$186 million, up 40.9% from the prior-year quarter and 45% at cc.

Other

Revenues in the segment were \$129 million, up 5.7% on a year-over-year basis and 7% at cc.

Margin Analysis

Baxter reported gross profit of \$1.04 billion in the second quarter, down 9.9% year over year. As a percentage of revenues, gross margin contracted 250 bps on a year-over-year basis at 38.2% in the second quarter.

Operating income fell 5.4% year over year to \$331 million in the quarter under review. As a percentage of revenues, operating margin contracted 20 bps to 12.2% in the quarter under review.

Guidance

For full-year 2020, Baxter anticipates sales growth between (1%) and 1% on a reported basis. On both constant currency and operational basis, sales growth is expected to be flat to up low-single digits.

Adjusted earnings per share is estimated in the range of \$3-\$3.10.

It is important to mention here that the aforementioned outlook takes into account, among other factors, a sequential improvement on a quarterly basis in both hospital admissions and surgical volumes although still below year-ago period levels.

Valuation

Baxter's shares are down 4.9% in the year-to-date period while down 9% in the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry is up 0.2% in the year to date period while that in the Zacks Medical Market are down 0.9%. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry and sector are up 6.2% and up 15.1%, respectively.

The S&P 500 index is up 7.7% in the year-to-date period and 19.5% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 22.6X Forward 12-months earnings, which compares to 28.4X for the Zacks sub-industry, 22.2X for the Zacks sector and 22.3X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 28.1X and as low as 18.8X, with a 5-year median of 23.9X.

Our Underperform recommendation indicates that the stock will perform below the market. Our \$67 price target reflects 19.2X forward 12-months earnings.

The table below shows summary valuation data for BAX.

Valuation Multiples - BAX					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	22.62	28.37	22.17	22.32
	5-Year High	28.13	31.01	23.12	23.47
	5-Year Low	18.76	17.09	15.87	15.27
	5-Year Median	23.87	20.60	18.99	17.70
P/S F12M	Current	3.34	3.88	2.79	4.10
	5-Year High	4.03	3.92	3.26	4.30
	5-Year Low	1.80	2.90	2.24	3.18
	5-Year Median	3.20	3.33	2.85	3.67
P/B TTM	Current	4.89	3.26	3.86	5.94
	5-Year High	6.20	3.48	5.08	6.20
	5-Year Low	2.15	2.20	2.96	3.75
	5-Year Median	3.96	2.85	4.30	4.89

As of 10/08/2020

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Bottom 49% (128 out of 252)



Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
DaVita Inc. (DVA)	Outperform	1
AngioDynamics, Inc. (ANGO)	Neutral	1
Accuray Incorporated (ARAY)	Neutral	3
Becton, Dickinson and Company (BDX)	Neutral	4
Boston Scientific Corporation (BSX)	Neutral	2
Fresenius Medical Care AGCo. KGaA (FMS)	Neutral	4
Medtronic PLC (MDT)	Neutral	3
3M Company (MMM)	Neutral	2

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

Industry Comparison Industry: Medical - Products				Industry Peers		
	BAX	X Industry	S&P 500	BDX	BSX	FMS
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Underperform	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	4	-	-	4	2	4
VGM Score	B	-	-	B	D	A
Market Cap	39.92 B	349.15 M	24.20 B	68.47 B	57.93 B	25.77 B
# of Analysts	11	3	14	12	12	4
Dividend Yield	1.24%	0.00%	1.6%	1.34%	0.00%	1.15%
Value Score	C	-	-	C	D	A
Cash/Price	0.10	0.13	0.07	0.04	0.03	0.08
EV/EBITDA	22.51	-0.29	13.53	20.30	28.77	6.96
PEG F1	2.02	3.91	2.90	2.33	4.07	2.19
P/B	4.89	3.46	3.54	2.85	3.63	1.76
P/CF	15.87	19.64	13.37	11.37	16.85	7.77
P/E F1	25.84	39.08	21.94	18.50	40.73	16.82
P/S TTM	3.50	5.42	2.66	4.05	5.70	1.29
Earnings Yield	3.87%	0.13%	4.31%	5.41%	2.45%	5.95%
Debt/Equity	0.74	0.07	0.70	0.71	0.59	0.47
Cash Flow (\$/share)	4.97	0.00	6.92	20.77	2.40	5.56
Growth Score	C	-	-	B	F	A
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	NA%	10.67%	10.45%	10.16%	11.21%	9.27%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	-7.77%	3.90%	-3.01%	28.88%	-37.08%	1.48%
Current Cash Flow Growth	4.10%	5.71%	5.47%	14.64%	12.08%	47.56%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	-6.10%	8.04%	8.50%	24.86%	10.33%	13.72%
Current Ratio	2.97	2.91	1.35	1.45	1.87	1.01
Debt/Capital	42.60%	13.58%	42.90%	41.57%	37.27%	32.02%
Net Margin	8.10%	-14.89%	10.28%	5.30%	39.18%	7.26%
Return on Equity	20.75%	-9.00%	14.79%	14.19%	12.86%	10.50%
Sales/Assets	0.62	0.51	0.51	0.32	0.34	0.54
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	0.38%	0.00%	-0.62%	12.12%	-6.55%	9.68%
Momentum Score	A	-	-	A	B	D
Daily Price Change	-3.43%	0.00%	1.28%	0.22%	0.77%	0.00%
1-Week Price Change	-1.02%	0.00%	2.13%	3.83%	3.05%	-0.77%
4-Week Price Change	-5.15%	1.25%	4.49%	0.87%	-1.17%	2.20%
12-Week Price Change	-8.11%	-2.64%	6.74%	-10.88%	11.33%	0.98%
52-Week Price Change	-10.00%	2.93%	6.65%	-4.96%	6.61%	32.53%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	2,817,055	213,838	2,121,744	1,569,462	7,143,667	146,072
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.45%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-1.18%	2.88%	-3.84%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	-7.29%	4.58%	3.47%	2.48%	10.69%	9.84%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-0.81%	0.24%	0.00%

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	C
Growth Score	C
Momentum Score	A
VGM Score	B

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

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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 forward-looking 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 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 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.