

Big Lots, Inc.(BIG)

\$26.50 (As of 05/11/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$23.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

Zacks Recommendation: Underperform

(Since: 03/05/20)

Prior Recommendation: Neutral

Short Term: 1-3 Months

Zacks Rank: (1-5)

3-Hold

Zacks Style Scores:

VGM:A

Value: A

Growth: A

Momentum: F

Summary

Shares of Big Lots have declined and underperformed the industry in a year. In addition, the company reported lower-than-expected results during fourth-quarter fiscal 2019 results and issued a cautionary statement over the sluggish start to first-quarter fiscal 2020. Recently, management withdrew outlook for first quarter and fiscal 2020, thanks to heightened uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus outbreak. The company also made unplanned expenditure on temporary store, distribution center wage increases and other items. These additional expenses are likely to continue in the remainder of the fiscal first quarter. Nevertheless, it has been witnessing higher sales for essential items, including consumables and food, which have been driving comps. Additionally, the company has been making operational enhancements.

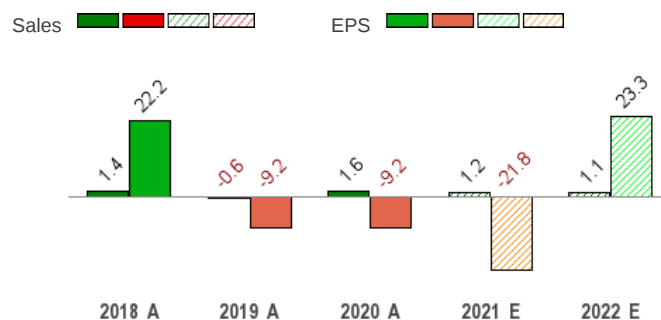
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52 Week High-Low	\$36.00 - \$10.13
20 Day Average Volume (sh)	1,546,667
Market Cap	\$1.0 B
YTD Price Change	-7.7%
Beta	2.16
Dividend / Div Yld	\$1.20 / 4.5%
Industry	Retail - Discount Stores
Zacks Industry Rank	Bottom 11% (224 out of 253)

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	-5.5%
Last Sales Surprise	-1.2%
EPS F1 Est- 4 week change	-4.1%
Expected Report Date	05/29/2020
Earnings ESP	18.7%
P/E TTM	7.2
P/E F1	9.2
PEG F1	1.2
P/S TTM	0.2

Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022	1,345 E	1,296 E	1,188 E	1,650 E	5,447 E
2021	1,321 E	1,275 E	1,174 E	1,615 E	5,386 E
2020	1,296 A	1,252 A	1,168 A	1,607 A	5,323 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022	\$0.73 E	\$0.41 E	-\$0.34 E	\$3.40 E	\$3.54 E
2021	\$0.35 E	\$0.27 E	-\$0.21 E	\$2.52 E	\$2.87 E
2020	\$0.92 A	\$0.53 A	-\$0.18 A	\$2.39 A	\$3.67 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 05/11/2020. The reports text is as of 05/12/2020.

Overview

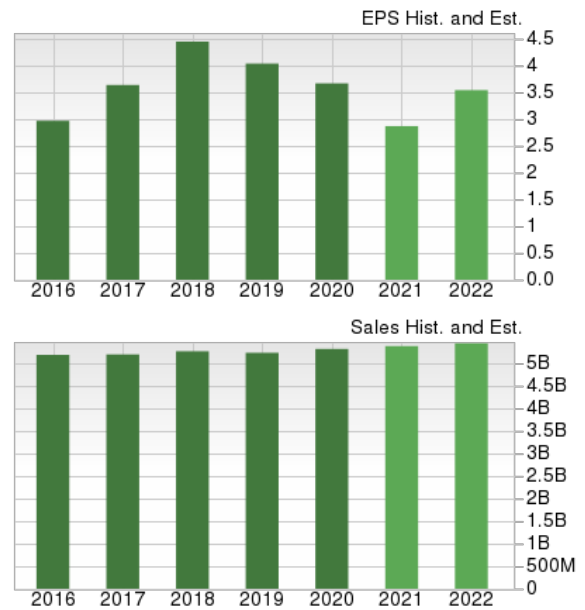
Based in Columbus, OH and founded in 1967, Big Lots, Inc. along with its fully-owned subsidiaries is a broad-line closeout retailer in the United States.

The company offers products under various merchandising categories, which include Food, Consumables, Furniture, Seasonal, Soft Home, Hard Home, Electronics and Toys & Accessories. The company's furniture category includes upholstery, mattress, case goods, and ready to-assemble departments while the seasonal category includes Christmas trim, lawn & garden, summer, and other holiday departments.

Further, its Soft Home category includes fashion bedding, utility bedding, bath, window, decorative textile, home organization, area rugs, home décor, and frames departments. Consumables category comprises health, beauty and cosmetics, plastics, paper, chemical, and pet departments.

Food category comprises beverage & grocery, candy & snacks, and specialty foods departments. Electronics, Toys, & Accessories category comprises our electronics, toys, jewelry, and hosiery departments. Small appliances, table top, food preparation, stationery, greeting cards, and home maintenance departments form a part of the Hard Home category.

These products are processed for retail sale and distributed to its stores that are located in five regional distribution centers including Pennsylvania, Ohio, Alabama, Oklahoma, and California. As of Feb 1, 2020, Big Lots operated 1,402 stores across 47 states.



Reasons To Sell:

- ▼ **Dismal Stock Performance, COVID-19 Impacts:** Shares of Big Lots have lost 21.7% against the industry's gain of 20.2% in the past year. The decline can primarily be attributed to lower-than-expected fourth-quarter fiscal 2019 results and apprehensions regarding the impact of coronavirus outbreak on its first-quarter 2020 performance. Moreover, both earnings and revenues missed the consensus mark after beating the same in the trailing three quarters. Recently, management withdrew outlook for first quarter and fiscal 2020, thanks to heightened uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus outbreak. The company also made unplanned expenditure on temporary store, distribution center wage increases and other items. These additional expenses are likely to continue in the remainder of the fiscal first quarter.
- ▼ **Rising S&A Expenses May Hurt Profit:** Big Lots is grappling with rising costs. Any deleverage in adjusted S&A expenses has a direct bearing on the company's profitability. Selling and administrative expenses include store expenses (such as payroll and occupancy costs) and costs related to warehousing, distribution, outbound transportation to our stores, advertising, purchasing, insurance, non-income taxes, accepting credit/debit cards, and other overheads.
- ▼ **Margins Look Strained:** Big Lots has been facing soft margins trend for a while now. The company continued to witness gross margin pressures in fourth-quarter fiscal 2019, wherein the metric contracted 170 basis points (bps) to 39.5%. The downside can be attributed to higher markdown from promotional selling and rise in shrink expense.
- ▼ **Stiff Competition:** Big Lots is facing intense competition from other general merchandise, discount, food, furniture, arts and crafts, and dollar store retailers, which operate in traditional brick and mortar stores and online. This may result in loss of market share as well as fall in sales and operating margins. Competitors with larger number of stores, greater market presence and better financial resources will continue to weigh on the company's results.
- ▼ **Dip in Consumer Sentiment May Impact Sales:** Any dip in consumer confidence – a key determinant of the economy's health – may have serious bearing on spending. The company's customers remain sensitive to macroeconomic factors including interest rate hikes, increase in fuel and energy costs, credit availability, unemployment levels, and high household debt levels, which may negatively impact their sentiment. This may adversely impact its growth and profitability.

Big Lots continued to witness gross margin pressures in fourth-quarter fiscal 2019. Moreover, the company has been grappling with rising costs.

Risks

- **Growth Drivers:** Big Lots is likely to continue gaining from its transformation initiative, referred to as Operation North Star that encompasses driving top line growth, cost containment, and enhancement in systems and infrastructure. Management remains focused on improving the performance by enhancing digital capabilities with BOPIS, launching the Broyhill brand, expanding high volume stores, and investing in marketing to drive traffic and build brand awareness. Net sales inched up 0.5% during the final quarter of fiscal 2019. The upside can be attributed to sales growth in high volume new stores and relocated non-comp stores, and increased store count. Notably, furniture was the top performing category that registered a low-double digits comps growth in the quarter with notable strength in mattresses, upholstery and case goods. Upholstery benefited from the introduction of Broyhill, iconic furniture and soft and hard home brand. The company's two financing options for in-store purchases, Easy Leasing and credit card, is performing very well.
 - **Store of the Future and New Stores Strategy:** Among the company's initiatives, Store of the Future and new stores strategy deserve a mention. The Store of the Future initiative is a key driver of the company's recent positive trends in sales and customer feedback. This positions its shareholders for solid returns and its business for long-term success. The positive sales trends in these store formats (Store of the Future and new stores) is being backed by bigger basket as well as higher transactions. After remodeling 205 stores in fiscal 2019, the company now expects 'Store of the Future' conversions to nearly 20 stores, calling off store openings in view of the coronavirus outbreak. The company targets those stores and markets that generate great returns.
 - **E-commerce and Rewards Growth:** Big Lots is leaving no stone unturned to tap the best in the market, as clear from its efforts to leverage marketing strategies, with loyalty databases and e-commerce enhancement. The company is excited about its strong e-commerce growth, buoyed by the success of the "Buy Online Pick-up In Store" (BOPIS) functionality across many stores. Notably, BOPIS has helped the company to increase their rate of orders. In order to tap higher volume, the company is also leveraging loyalty database with one-to-one marketing, which resulted in increased site traffic in number of orders and higher average basket. Big Lots doubled its digital business in fiscal 2019, and now represents roughly 2% of sales.
 - **Cost Reduction Initiatives:** Big Lots is on track with its three-year cost reduction program. Management now anticipates total savings from Fund the Journey initiative to be more than \$100 million by the end of fiscal 2020. The areas where the company will focus to contain costs include organization size and structure, store payroll, indirect costs, supply chain and cost of goods sold. The company is enhancing in-store labor model by simplifying the management structure, which should improve shopping experience through better utilization of resources to serve customers.
-

Last Earnings Report

Big Lots' Q4 Earnings Miss, Coronavirus-Hit View

Big Lots, Inc. reported fourth-quarter fiscal 2019 results, wherein both earnings and revenues missed the consensus mark after beating the same in the trailing three quarters. The company also cautioned about the impact of coronavirus outbreak on its first-quarter fiscal 2020 performance. Supply chain disturbance owing to the outbreak and slow start to the first quarter remain major concerns. The company's first-quarter fiscal 2020 will also be impacted by upfront investments and growth efforts, which will primarily benefit the company in the second quarter and beyond.

Quarter Ending 01/2020

Report Date	Feb 27, 2020
Sales Surprise	-1.18%
EPS Surprise	-5.53%
Quarterly EPS	2.39
Annual EPS (TTM)	3.66

Q4 in Details

The company reported adjusted earnings of \$2.39 a share, missing the Zacks Consensus Estimate of \$2.53. The bottom line came below management's guidance of \$2.40 to \$2.55. Moreover, the company's adjusted earnings declined 10.8% year over year.

Net sales inched up 0.5% to \$1,607 million but lagged the Zacks Consensus Estimate of \$1,626 million. The upside can be attributed to sales growth in high volume new stores and relocated non-comp stores, and increased store count. The gain was marginally offset by comparable sales decline. Notably, furniture was the top performing category that registered a low-double digits comps growth in the quarter with notable strength in mattresses, upholstery and case goods. Hard home, electronics toys and accessories were down, reflecting the strategic decision to move space to other categories.

Comps declined 0.9% against the company's expectations of marginally positive comps. While sales were above the company's expectation in November, it declined significantly in December. In January, sales were in line with expectations.

Gross profit decreased 3.8% year over year to \$634 million, while gross margin contracted 170 basis points (bps) to 39.5%. The downside can be attributed to higher markdown from promotional selling and rise in shrink expense.

The company expects gross margin for the fiscal first quarter to be under pressure due to higher promotion expenses and adverse impact of tariffs. For fiscal 2020, the company expects gross margin to be flattish. It expects Fund the Journey savings and favorable mix to be offset by higher promotion expenses and adverse impact of tariffs on the margin.

In the reported quarter, S&A expenses came in at \$471.1 million, down 1.2% year over year. Moreover, the metric (as a percentage of net sales) declined 50 bps from the prior-year quarter to 29.3%. Big Lots expects deleverage in S&A expenses in the first quarter and fiscal 2020 on account of upfront expenses and additional marketing support, as well as higher depreciation and occupancy expense and the impact of wage pressures in fiscal 2020. Operating profit came in at \$125.5 million, down 15.4% year over year.

Other Details

The company ended the quarter with cash and cash equivalents of \$52.7 million. Inventories decreased 5% to \$921.3 million. Management stated that inventory levels were up at the end of fiscal 2018 due to tariff mitigation activities. Long-term debt totaled \$279.5 million, down from \$374.1 million in the prior-year quarter. Total shareholders' equity was \$845.5 million.

Big Lots incurred capital expenditures of approximately \$265 million and generated free cash flow of roughly \$74 million in fiscal 2019.

Management envisions capital expenditures between \$160 million and \$270 million in fiscal 2020, lower than what the company had earlier projected. This is due to lower number of store conversions from 205 remodels in fiscal 2019 to 80 in fiscal 2020.

In fiscal 2019, the company has returned about \$98 million to its shareholders in the form of share repurchases and dividends. During the quarter, the company opened four stores and closed 18.

Guidance

Big Lots' projects comps to decline in the range of low to mid-single digit range in first-quarter fiscal 2020, which comprises of effect of supply chain disruption on account of the coronavirus outbreak. Based on comps expectations, the company envisions first-quarter earnings per share in the range of 30-45 cents, which suggests a decline from 92 cents reported in the year-ago quarter.

For fiscal 2020, the company expects adjusted earnings in the range of \$3.20-\$3.40 per share. However, the guidance indicates a decline from the prior-year reported figure of \$3.67. Management expects comparable sales to be flat to up low single digit.

Recent News

Big Lots' Comps Positive Amid Coronavirus Crisis - Apr 27, 2020

Big Lots reported positive quarter-to-date comparable sales (comps) for first-quarter fiscal 2020, defying coronavirus woes. Also, comps were positive so far in April despite the cancellation of the "Friends and Family" event and closure of all stores on Easter day. Notably, sales accelerated strongly in the past two weeks, leading to this upside. Also, it continued to outpace its sales expectations. Management has also been extending the \$2-hourly raise for the hourly store and DC staff through May, as well as extending a 30% associate discount.

Big Lots Announces Sale and Leaseback Deal - Apr 8, 2020

Big Lots recently entered into sale and leaseback agreements with affiliates of Oak Street Real Estate Capital, LLC, worth gross proceeds of \$725 million. This is with respect to the relating to its distribution centers in Columbus, OH, Durant, OK, Montgomery, AL, and Tremont, PA. These transactions are likely to conclude in fiscal second quarter, and subjected to customary closing conditions. Net proceeds from the transactions are expected to be used in paying down debt on its revolving credit facility, strengthening liquidity and other corporate purposes.

Big Lots Calls Off View & Defers Store Plans Amid Coronavirus - Mar 30, 2020

Big Lots has issued more updates in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Although higher sales of essential items, including consumables and food, drove low-single digit comparable sales (comps) growth quarter-to-date, management withdrew outlook for first quarter and fiscal 2020. Moreover, it cancelled the "Friends and Family" event for April, which is expected to hurt the company's top line for the fiscal first quarter.

During the fourth-quarter conference call, management had projected that the fiscal first quarter will be a tough one owing to supply-chain disruptions from the pandemic and upfront investments in higher-return growth initiatives. The company had projected comps decline in the range of low to mid-single digit range and earnings per share in the band of 30-45 cents for the quarter. Big Lots had delivered earnings of 92 cents in the same quarter a year ago.

Valuation

Big Lots shares are down 6.8% in the year-to-date period and 21.7% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry is down 5.8% but the Zacks Retail-Wholesale sector is up 3.6%, in the year-to-date period. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry and the sector are up 20.2% and 14.6%, respectively.

The S&P 500 index is down 9% in the year-to-date period but up 4% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 8.67X forward 12-month earnings, which compares to 26.46X for the Zacks sub-industry, 30.49X for the Zacks sector and 21.15X for the S&P 500 index.

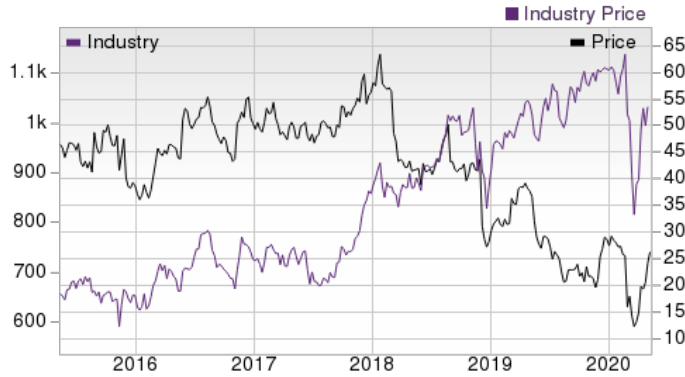
Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 15.76X and as low as 3.32X, with a 5-year median of 11.32X. Our Underperform recommendation indicates that the stock will perform worse than the market. Our \$23 price target reflects 7.52X forward 12-month earnings.

The table below shows summary valuation data for BIG

Valuation Multiples - BIG					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	8.67	26.46	30.49	21.15
	5-Year High	15.76	26.46	30.49	21.15
	5-Year Low	3.32	17.95	19.06	15.19
	5-Year Median	11.32	20.07	23.3	17.45
P/S F12M	Current	0.19	1.36	1.04	3.3
	5-Year High	0.52	1.39	1.11	3.44
	5-Year Low	0.08	0.94	0.8	2.54
	5-Year Median	0.39	1.12	0.93	3.02
EV/EBITDA TTM	Current	6.75	17.91	15.77	10.63
	5-Year High	8.03	19.86	16.33	12.86
	5-Year Low	4.15	10.91	10.9	8.28
	5-Year Median	6.11	13.84	12.56	10.77

As of 05/11/2020

Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Bottom 11% (224 out of 253)



Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Costco Wholesale Corporation (COST)	Neutral	3
Dollar General Corporation (DG)	Neutral	3
Dollar Tree Inc (DLTR)	Neutral	3
Target Corporation (TGT)	Neutral	3
Tuesday Morning Corp (TUES)	Neutral	3
Zumiez Inc (ZUMZ)	Neutral	3
Burlington Stores Inc (BURL)	Underperform	5
Ross Stores Inc (ROST)	Underperform	5

Industry Comparison Industry: Retail - Discount Stores				Industry Peers		
	BIG	X Industry	S&P 500	BURL	COST	TUES
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Underperform	-	-	Underperform	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	5	3	3
VGM Score	A	-	-	B	B	A
Market Cap	1.04 B	15.06 B	19.55 B	11.67 B	137.04 B	13.45 M
# of Analysts	6	11	14	10	9	1
Dividend Yield	4.53%	0.84%	2.13%	0.00%	0.90%	0.00%
Value Score	A	-	-	F	C	A
Cash/Price	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.03	0.06	0.34
EV/EBITDA	4.90	12.90	11.85	17.29	21.21	19.37
PEG Ratio	1.23	2.86	2.60	33.18	4.19	NA
Price/Book (P/B)	1.22	5.15	2.71	22.09	8.06	0.08
Price/Cash Flow (P/CF)	3.69	12.77	10.71	16.41	26.65	0.94
P/E (F1)	9.31	27.60	19.55	55.74	36.19	NA
Price/Sales (P/S)	0.20	0.78	2.01	1.60	0.87	0.01
Earnings Yield	10.83%	3.27%	4.85%	1.79%	2.76%	-150.00%
Debt/Equity	1.56	1.46	0.76	6.29	0.44	1.81
Cash Flow (\$/share)	7.18	6.38	7.01	10.73	11.64	0.30
Growth Score	A	-	-	A	A	B
Hist. EPS Growth (3-5 yrs)	9.11%	12.09%	10.82%	34.46%	12.09%	NA
Proj. EPS Growth (F1/F0)	-21.75%	-24.43%	-9.99%	-57.37%	4.69%	-50.00%
Curr. Cash Flow Growth	0.18%	9.68%	5.83%	7.36%	14.92%	245.11%
Hist. Cash Flow Growth (3-5 yrs)	2.93%	8.54%	8.52%	18.02%	10.65%	1.26%
Current Ratio	1.22	1.19	1.27	0.97	1.04	1.17
Debt/Capital	60.86%	59.24%	44.41%	86.29%	30.74%	64.45%
Net Margin	4.55%	4.38%	10.59%	6.38%	2.39%	-1.92%
Return on Equity	19.91%	24.73%	16.36%	131.83%	23.41%	-11.05%
Sales/Assets	1.66	1.76	0.55	1.37	3.34	1.81
Proj. Sales Growth (F1/F0)	1.18%	0.59%	-2.41%	-13.69%	6.84%	-2.98%
Momentum Score	F	-	-	D	D	A
Daily Price Chg	1.42%	-0.55%	-0.95%	-1.66%	1.43%	-5.41%
1 Week Price Chg	8.78%	1.64%	3.23%	-0.22%	1.33%	-39.54%
4 Week Price Chg	39.69%	5.14%	4.49%	5.97%	3.57%	-54.10%
12 Week Price Chg	3.27%	-18.11%	-20.09%	-28.33%	-2.51%	-83.53%
52 Week Price Chg	-22.42%	-6.68%	-7.00%	12.92%	28.28%	-83.53%
20 Day Average Volume	1,546,667	2,104,017	2,530,553	856,335	2,915,888	2,740,906
(F1) EPS Est 1 week change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-1.66%	0.00%
(F1) EPS Est 4 week change	-4.12%	-4.12%	-6.07%	-36.88%	-2.34%	0.00%
(F1) EPS Est 12 week change	-29.13%	-20.07%	-15.69%	-61.46%	-0.37%	0.00%
(Q1) EPS Est Mthly Chg	-32.66%	-11.88%	-12.45%	-119.67%	-7.68%	0.00%

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 have an excellent 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	A
Growth Score	A
Momentum Score	F
VGM Score	A

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

Disclosures

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

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

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

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

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

No part of this report can be reprinted, republished or transmitted electronically without the prior written authorization of ZIR.