Carters, Inc. (CRI)

$101.79 (As of 05/18/21)

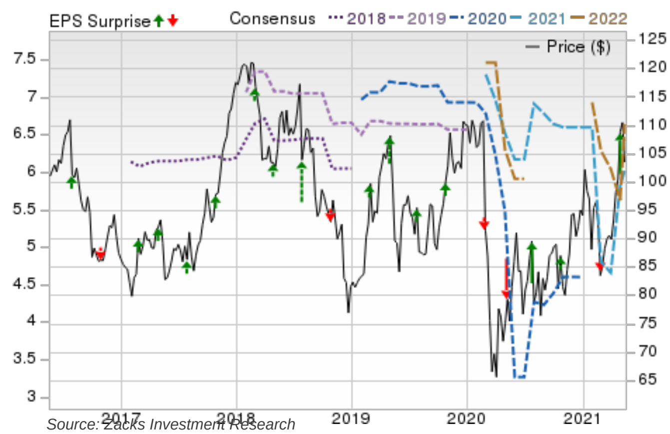
Price Target (6-12 Months): **$108.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months	**Zacks Recommendation:** (Since: 04/30/21) Prior Recommendation: Underperform	**Neutral**
Short Term: 1-3 Months	**Zacks Rank:** (1-5)	**3-Hold**
	Zacks Style Scores:	VGM:A
	Value: B | Growth: B | Momentum: B	

Summary

Shares of Carter's have outpaced the industry in the past three months on strong first-quarter 2021 results and an upbeat view. Top and bottom lines beat the Zacks Consensus Estimate and improved year over year in first-quarter 2021. Results were aided by demand for its products in March, led by spring offerings. Also, better promotions, productivity and enhanced pricing aided results. The company lifted its 2021 view and issued an upbeat second quarter guidance. Continued momentum in online demand driven by expanded products, ease of checkout, site navigation and faster delivery bode well. However, COVID-19 related costs for protective equipment and cleaning supplies are likely to affect second-quarter and 2021 results. High store related expenses and higher compensation costs are likely to led SG&A expense deleverage.

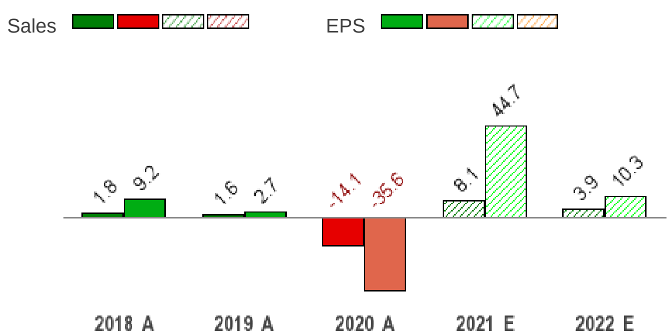
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	**$116.92 - $76.01**
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	**904,900**
Market Cap	**$4.5 B**
Year-To-Date Price Change	**8.2%**
Beta	**1.40**
Dividend / Dividend Yield	**$1.60 / 1.6%**
Industry	**Shoes and Retail Apparel**
Zacks Industry Rank	**Top 43% (108 out of 251)**
Last EPS Surprise	**633.3%**
Last Sales Surprise	**19.9%**
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	**29.2%**
Expected Report Date	**07/23/2021**
Earnings ESP	**0.0%**
P/E TTM	**14.7**
P/E F1	**16.9**
PEG F1	**4.4**
P/S TTM	**1.4**

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Sales Estimates (millions of $)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022					3,396 E
2021	787 A	695 E	872 E	994 E	3,268 E
2020	654 A	515 A	865 A	990 A	3,024 A

EPS Estimates

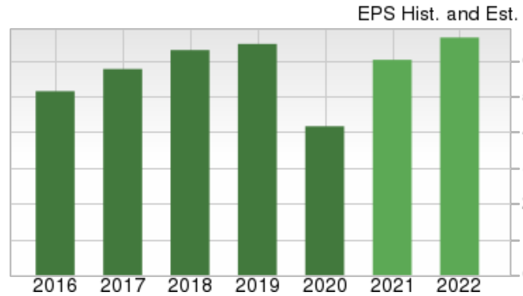
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022					$6.64 E
2021	$1.98 A	$0.71 E	$1.45 E	$1.86 E	$6.02 E
2020	-$0.81 A	$0.54 A	$1.96 A	$2.46 A	$4.16 A

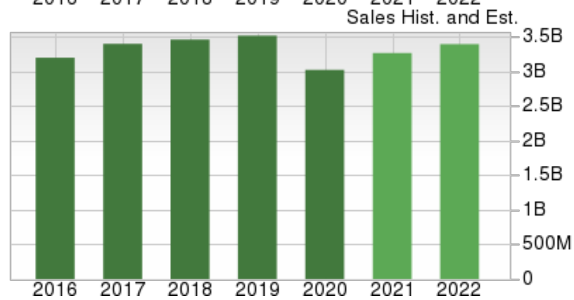
*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and sales estimates, is as of 05/18/2021. The report's text and the analyst-provided price target are as of 05/19/2021.

Overview

Headquartered in Atlanta, GA, Carter's Inc. is the largest marketer of branded apparel and related products for babies, and young children in North America.





Notably, the company has a portfolio of popular brands, including Carter's, OshKoshB'gosh, Just One You, Child of Mine, Simple Joys, Skip Hop, and Precious Firsts. It sells the products through leading department stores, national chains and specialty retailers, both domestically and internationally. Additionally, Carter's showcases its products through company-operated stores in the United States, Canada and Mexico, and its websites namely www.carters.com, www.oshkoshbgosh.com and www.cartersoshkosh.ca.

The company generated $3 billion in net sales in 2020. As of Apr 3, 2021, it operated 1,000 stores in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Additionally, it had a solid wholesale presence in the United States (including department stores, national chain stores, specialty stores and discount retailers). It also operates through e-commerce sites in the United States, Canada and China as well as other international wholesale, licensing and online channels.

Of all the brands, Carter's and OshKoshB'gosh are the two most recognized and trusted names for young children's apparel. Among the rest, its Genuine Kids and Just One You brands are sold at Target, Child of Mine brand is sold at Walmart and Simple Joys brand is available on Amazon. The company's Skip Hop brand is a fast-growing global lifestyle brand and innovative leader in the children's durables product category.

The company's reportable segments include U.S. Retail, U.S. Wholesale and International.

The U.S. Retail segment includes the sale of its products through its U.S. retail and e-commerce websites.

U.S. Wholesale segment consists of revenues, primarily from the sale of products to its U.S. wholesale partners.

The International segment comprises the sale of products outside the United States through its company and franchisee-operated retail stores in Canada and Mexico, e-commerce sites in Canada and China, and sales to its international wholesale customers.

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Buy:

▲ **Robust Q1 Results Aids Stock**: Shares of Carter's have gained 9% in the past three months outperforming the industry's growth of 0.6%. The stock's bullish run on the bourses can be attributable to impressive first-quarter 2021 results and upbeat view. The company's top and bottom line beat the Zacks Consensus Estimate and advanced year over year in the first quarter. Results gained from improved demand for its products in March, led by its spring offerings along with government stimulus and accelerated vaccine rollout program. Also, better promotions, productivity and enhanced pricing contributed to quarterly growth. Notably, net sales increased 20% year over year backed by growth across all segments along with solid demand and improved store traffic following the passing of $1.9 trillion pandemic relief bill on Mar 11. Also, favorable currency movements to the tune of $3.1 million aided top line growth.

Carter's Q1 gained from high demand, particularly in March, led by strength in spring offerings and solid online show. As a result, management lifted 2021 view.

▲ **E-commerce Growth**: Carter's is seeking opportunities to strengthen e-commerce capabilities through investments to speed up deliveries. The company's e-commerce business has been performing well with 38% growth in the first quarter of 2021. This uptick is mainly driven by improved and expanded products, ease of checkout, site navigation, faster delivery and search capabilities. Strength in babywear acted as a key growth driver. Further, e-commerce sales in the wholesale channel grew more than 60% year over year. Moreover, 29% of the company's stores fulfilled online orders, which reflects an improvement from 16% in the prior year's quarter. Management had earlier anticipated e-commerce penetration to surge to 42% by 2024.

▲ **Raised 2021 View Bodes Well**: Driven by solid first-quarter 2021 results, management raised its 2021 guidance. The company now anticipates sales to grow roughly 10%, up from earlier guided view of almost 5%. Also, bottom line is now envisioned to rise nearly 40% year over year compared to prior view of 10% for 2021. Also, it issued an upbeat second quarter view wherein it expects sales to rise nearly 35% with bottom line growth of roughly 25% year over year. Moreover, adjusted operating income is likely to increase almost 35% year over year. Moreover, it forecasts robust sales growth across all segments in the second quarter. Further, gross margin is projected to expand year over year.

▲ **Omni-Channel Capabilities**: Carter's has been making efforts to enhance omni-channel capabilities. In this regard, the company is gaining from its same-day pickup service for online orders, easy access to a broad array of online products when shopping in stores and easy access to its new credit card program. Also, buy online and pickup at store facility acted as a major growth driver. As a result, omnichannel sales surged more than 100% year over year during the first quarter. Apart from these, management is offering same-day pickup and curbside pickup facilities in more than 600 stores in the United States. Going forward, the company earlier anticipated omni-channel to increase roughly 40% of online sales by 2025.

▲ **Debt Analysis**: Carter's long-term debt of $989.5 million as of Apr 3, 2021, remained almost flat on a sequential basis. Moreover, its debt-to-capitalization ratio is at a respectable 0.49 compared with 0.51 reported in the prior quarter. Further, the company approved a quarterly dividend of 40 cents per share to be paid on May 28 as of shareholders record on May 12. Also, the company has $745 million remaining for borrowings under its revolving credit facility. That said, it boasts liquidity of $1.8 billion at the end of the reported quarter.

Reasons To Sell:

- **High Costs Remain a Concern**: During the first quarter, Carter's adjusted SG&A expenses rose 3.4% year over year to $270.9 million. This was mainly due to compensation-related costs, promotional activities, increased investment in marketing, digital media and omni-channel capabilities. Prior to this, adjusted SG&A expenses rose 5% year over year in fourth-quarter 2020. Going ahead, rising transportation costs, supply chain disruptions, uncertainties in store traffic, promotions, and international demand as well as product cost inflation remain concerns. Management projects higher SG&A in the second quarter owing to store related expenses and higher compensation expenses. Also, elevated freight costs in order to meet growing demand is likely to hurt gross margin in the second quarter.

Carter's continues to witness adverse COVID-19 related impacts which is likely to hurt the second half of 2021. Also, elevated compensation benefits and other store related expense remain concerns.

- **COVID-19 Related Costs, a Worry**: Carter's has been witnessing direct costs including health and safety-related expenses stemming from the COVID-19 crisis. In fact, management anticipates incurring costs related to additional protective equipment and cleaning supplies of $7 million in 2021 and $2 million in the second quarter. Moreover, it projects adverse COVID-19 impacts including store closures, elevated compensation benefits, higher taxes and delay in the timing of wholesale shipments to hurt the second half of 2021.

- **Competitive Pressure**: Carter's faces intense competition from other well-established players in the apparel industry, on the basis of brand recognition, fashion, price, service, store location and quality. Failure to offer high-quality products at a competitive price may hamper Carter's market share and consequently, dent both top-line and bottom-line growth.

- **Macroeconomic Factors May Impact Discretionary Sales**: 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 discretionary spending, and in turn the company's growth and profitability.

Last Earnings Report

Carter's Beats Q1 Earnings & Sales Estimates, 2021 View Up

Quarter Ending	03/2021
Report Date	Apr 30, 2021
Sales Surprise	19.87%
EPS Surprise	633.33%
Quarterly EPS	1.98
Annual EPS (TTM)	6.94

Carter's reported impressive first-quarter 2021 results, wherein the bottom and top lines advanced year over year. Results gained from improved demand for its products in March led by its spring offerings along with government stimulus and accelerated vaccine rollout program. Also, better promotions, productivity and pricing efforts as well as enhanced pricing contributed to quarterly growth. Driven by such upsides, management lifted 2021 view.

Moreover, the company continued to witness healthy demand particularly for babywear from a few of its largest customers, like Target, Amazon and Walmart.

Q1 Highlights

Carter's reported first-quarter 2021 adjusted earnings of $1.98 per share, surpassing the Zacks Consensus Estimate of 27 cents. Moreover, the figure compared favorably with a loss of 81 cents reported in the prior quarter.

Net sales increased 20% to $787 million and exceeded the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $657 million. The uptick can be attributable to growth across all segments along with solid demand and improved store traffic, following the passing of $1.9 trillion pandemic relief bill on Mar 11. Also, favorable currency movements of $3.1 million aided top line growth.

The company's e-commerce business witnessed growth of 38% in the quarter under review driven by efforts including improved and expanded products, ease of checkout, site navigation, faster delivery and search capabilities. Also, buy online and pickup at store facility acted as a major growth driver.

Segmental Sales

Sales at the **U.S. Retail** segment rose 27% year over year to $407.1 million driven by double-digit growth in stores and online.

The **U.S. Wholesale** segment sales witnessed a rise of 12.4% to $283.4 million owing to exclusive brand strength to the tune of double-digits. Also, its flagship Carter's brand and Skip Hop brand performed well with double-digit growth in baby apparel.

The **International** segment witnessed a 18.7% growth in revenues to $96.9 million in the first quarter driven by improved performance across Canada and Mexico which more than offset store closures. Also, strength in Simple Joys brand remained an upside.

Margins

Gross profit surged 71.7% year over year to $392 million, while gross margin expanded 1490 basis points (bps) to 49.8%. The uptick can be attributable to improved pricing efforts, sturdy demand for its products led by strength in spring product offering, enhanced promotions and better inventory management. Also, reduced product costs aided margins.

Adjusted SG&A expenses rose 3.4% to $270.9 million in the quarter. However, the metric as a percentage of sales, contracted 560 bps to 34.4%.

The company's adjusted operating income was $128.5 million against operating loss of $26.3 million reported in the prior-year quarter. Meanwhile, adjusted operating margin was 16.3% in the quarter under review driven by strength in the company's spring product offering along with better pricing and enhanced inventory.

Balance Sheet & Shareholder-Friendly Moves

The company ended the first quarter with cash and cash equivalents of $1,053.7 million, net long-term debt of $990 million and shareholders' equity of $1,029.6 million. In the said quarter, the company used cash flow of $39.5 million for operating activities.

The company has $745 million remaining for borrowings under its revolving credit facility. It boasts liquidity of $1.8 billion at the end of the reported quarter.

During the first quarter, Carter's board approved a quarterly dividend of 40 cents per share to be paid on May 28 as of shareholders record on May 12. Also, it incurred capital expenditures of $11.7 million in the reported quarter.

Store Update

Carter's shut down 60 stores in the first quarter, with plans to close roughly 115 low-margin stores in 2021. Closure of these low productivity stores are likely to benefit the bottom line and margins in 2021. Also, it intends to open 10 stores beginning 2022.

Outlook

Encouraged by solid first quarter result, management raised its 2021 guidance. The company now anticipates sales to grow roughly 10%, up from the earlier guided view of almost 5%. Also, bottom line is now envisioned to rise nearly 40% year over year compared to prior view of 10% for 2021. This guidance includes $7 million costs related to additional protective equipment and cleaning supplies and $1 million restructuring costs.

The company also issued an upbeat second quarter view, wherein it expects sales to rise nearly 35% with bottom line growth of roughly 25% year over year. Moreover, adjusted operating income is likely to increase almost 35% year over year. This view is inclusive of $2 million pandemic related costs. Also, it forecasts robust sales growth across all segments in the second quarter. Further, gross margin is projected to expand year over year but decline sequentially due to elevated freight costs in order to meet growing demand. Apart from these, SG&A costs is likely to remain high owing to store related expenses and higher compensation expenses.

It projects adverse impacts including store closures, elevated compensation benefits, higher taxes and delay in the timing of wholesale shipments to hurt the second half of 2021. Also, rising transportation costs, supply chain disruptions, uncertainties in store traffic, promotions, and international demand as well as product cost inflation remain concerns.

Valuation

Carter's shares are up 8.6% in the year-to-date period and nearly 27.3% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry and the Zacks Consumer Discretionary sector are down 1.7% each, in the year-to-date period. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry and the sector are up 50.5% and 35.3%, respectively.

The S&P 500 index is up 11% over the year-to-date period and 42.9% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 16.28X forward 12-month earnings, which compares to 31.97X for the Zacks sub-industry, 30.24X for the Zacks sector and 21.62X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 21.14X and as low as 9.31X, with a 5-year median of 15.28X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in-line with the market. Our $108 price target reflects 17.27X forward 12-month earnings.

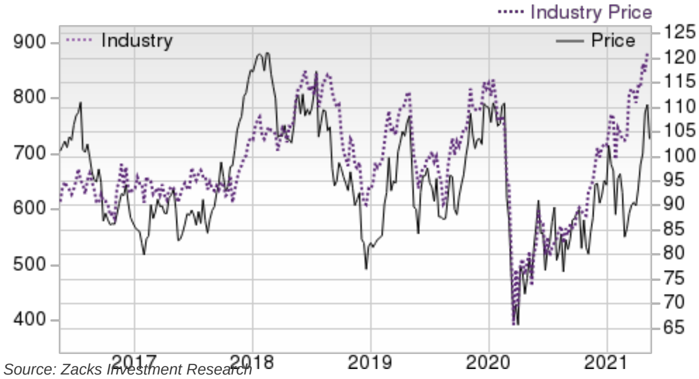
The table below shows summary valuation data for CRI

Valuation Multiples - CRI

		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	16.28	31.97	30.24	21.62
	5-Year High	21.14	36.55	35.41	23.83
	5-Year Low	9.31	18.66	16.24	15.3
	5-Year Median	15.28	24.37	20.33	18.02
P/S F12M	Current	1.35	4.08	2.7	4.64
	5-Year High	1.71	4.15	2.94	4.74
	5-Year Low	0.76	2.03	1.73	3.21
	5-Year Median	1.26	2.69	2.52	3.71
EV/EBITDA TTM	Current	8.43	36.89	14.13	16.85
	5-Year High	14.34	39.66	18.06	17.71
	5-Year Low	6.46	12.77	8.33	9.62
	5-Year Median	9.93	16.55	12.35	13.41

As of 05/18/2021 *Source: Zacks Investment Research*

Industry Analysis **Zacks Industry Rank:** Top 43% (108 out of 251)



Source: Zacks Investment Research

Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Anta Sports Products Ltd. **(ANPDF)**	Neutral	3
Caleres, Inc. **(CAL)**	Neutral	3
Deckers Outdoor Corporation **(DECK)**	Neutral	2
NIKE, Inc. **(NKE)**	Neutral	3
Steven Madden, Ltd. **(SHOO)**	Neutral	3
Skechers U.S.A., Inc. **(SKX)**	Neutral	3
Wolverine World Wide, Inc. **(WWW)**	Neutral	3
Xtep International Holdings Ltd. **(XTEPY)**	Neutral	2

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

Industry Comparison Industry: Shoes And Retail Apparel

Industry Peers

	CRI	X Industry	S&P 500	CAL	DECK	WWW
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	3	2	3
VGM Score	A	-	-	B	B	A
Market Cap	4.47 B	2.73 B	30.10 B	996.76 M	9.37 B	3.15 B
# of Analysts	3	5	12	1	6	6
Dividend Yield	1.57%	0.81%	1.31%	1.08%	0.00%	1.05%
Value Score	B	-	-	B	C	B
Cash/Price	0.23	0.12	0.05	0.09	0.12	0.11
EV/EBITDA	13.30	15.52	17.45	-9.20	21.41	-32.47
PEG F1	4.27	1.38	2.20	NA	1.08	NA
P/B	4.35	3.46	4.16	4.84	6.16	5.04
P/CF	13.75	16.67	17.38	3.33	29.54	28.67
P/E F1	16.53	21.95	21.80	20.01	23.19	18.38
P/S TTM	1.42	1.35	3.53	0.47	3.97	1.69
Earnings Yield	5.91%	4.57%	4.53%	5.00%	4.31%	5.44%
Debt/Equity	0.96	0.58	0.66	0.98	0.02	1.14
Cash Flow ($/share)	7.41	3.91	6.82	7.81	11.26	1.33
Growth Score	B	-	-	B	A	B
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	1.09%	-7.75%	9.39%	-8.94%	30.67%	-0.30%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	44.63%	109.34%	20.09%	192.86%	9.95%	122.58%
Current Cash Flow Growth	-23.02%	-15.03%	0.61%	86.19%	1.85%	-52.77%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	0.60%	4.68%	7.37%	16.09%	8.34%	-11.13%
Current Ratio	2.92	2.76	1.39	0.86	3.25	2.10
Debt/Capital	49.02%	44.10%	41.58%	49.38%	1.92%	53.19%
Net Margin	8.67%	3.09%	11.70%	-20.74%	15.48%	-6.01%
Return on Equity	34.55%	12.78%	15.91%	-20.90%	28.98%	12.78%
Sales/Assets	0.94	0.97	0.50	1.03	1.17	0.78
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	8.05%	13.99%	9.06%	23.84%	11.61%	26.57%
Momentum Score	B	-	-	F	D	A
Daily Price Change	-2.54%	-1.22%	-0.83%	-3.38%	-2.56%	-2.11%
1-Week Price Change	-6.34%	-1.62%	-0.87%	-2.33%	-1.62%	-12.51%
4-Week Price Change	4.44%	2.60%	1.84%	18.23%	1.42%	-2.03%
12-Week Price Change	10.33%	6.91%	9.84%	59.18%	2.52%	6.14%
52-Week Price Change	24.25%	76.35%	48.66%	295.89%	115.21%	103.69%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	904,900	104,060	1,913,723	492,421	229,239	545,414
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.44%	1.97%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	29.20%	1.21%	1.90%	0.00%	0.44%	1.97%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	-8.79%	0.69%	2.54%	0.00%	0.49%	0.28%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	33.02%	2.67%	1.08%	0.00%	0.00%	2.67%

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	B
Growth Score	B
Momentum Score	B
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

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

Additional Disclosure

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

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

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

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Periods:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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