

Cisco Systems(CSCO)

\$40.92 (As of 05/01/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$43.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

Zacks Recommendation:

Neutral

(Since: 08/14/19)

Prior Recommendation: Outperform

Short Term: 1-3 Months

Zacks Rank: (1-5)

3-Hold

Zacks Style Scores:

VGM:A

Value: B

Growth: C

Momentum: A

Summary

Cisco is benefiting from solid security business. Increasing demand for collaborative solutions, which includes Webex Teams, post the coronavirus outbreak is positive. Moreover, a strong uptake of Catalyst 9000 family of switches and Nexus 9K solutions is a key catalyst. Integration with Microsoft Azure, Office 365 and Amazon Web Services is expected to fortify footprint in the cloud space. Notably, Cisco's shares have outperformed the industry on a year-to-date basis. Despite a grim third-quarter fiscal 2020 outlook, the company's differentiated end-to-end approach across the network, cloud and endpoints is likely to be a key catalyst for the rest of fiscal 2020. However, lower customer spending, China-related weakness, and a growing global economic uncertainty due to the unabated spread of coronavirus are major headwinds.

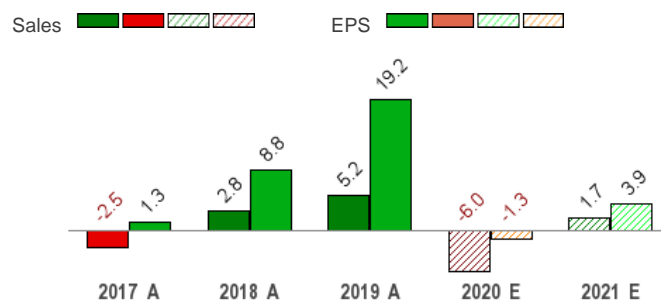
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52 Week High-Low	\$58.26 - \$32.40
20 Day Average Volume (sh)	21,700,674
Market Cap	\$173.5 B
YTD Price Change	-14.7%
Beta	0.97
Dividend / Div Yld	\$1.44 / 3.4%
Industry	Computer - Networking
Zacks Industry Rank	Top 26% (66 out of 253)

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	1.3%
Last Sales Surprise	0.2%
EPS F1 Est- 4 week change	-2.9%
Expected Report Date	05/13/2020
Earnings ESP	0.7%
P/E TTM	12.7
P/E F1	13.4
PEG F1	1.9
P/S TTM	3.4

Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	12,462 E	12,051 E	12,606 E	13,049 E	49,641 E
2020	13,159 A	12,005 A	11,876 E	11,998 E	48,795 E
2019	13,072 A	12,446 A	12,958 A	13,428 A	51,904 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	\$0.76 E	\$0.76 E	\$0.79 E	\$0.82 E	\$3.18 E
2020	\$0.84 A	\$0.77 A	\$0.72 E	\$0.69 E	\$3.06 E
2019	\$0.75 A	\$0.73 A	\$0.78 A	\$0.83 A	\$3.10 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 05/01/2020. The reports text is as of 05/04/2020.

Overview

Headquartered in San Jose, CA and founded in December 1984, Cisco Systems Inc. is an IP-based networking company, which offers other products and services to service providers, companies, commercial users and individuals.

Cisco has seven product categories: Switches aggregate and distribute information, collecting LANs, MANs and WANs filtering, processing and distributing it in the required volume and to the designated locations. They provide connectivity to end users, workstations, IP phones, access points and servers.

Next-Generation Network (NGN) Routers transport data, voice and video information from one IP network to another. Collaboration products integrate voice, video, data and mobile applications on fixed and mobile networks. Key products are Unified Communications and Cisco TelePresence Systems products.

Wireless technology includes networking products: wireless LAN controllers, wireless integrated switches and routers, wireless management software, wireless LAN clients and client software, bridges, antennas and accessories.

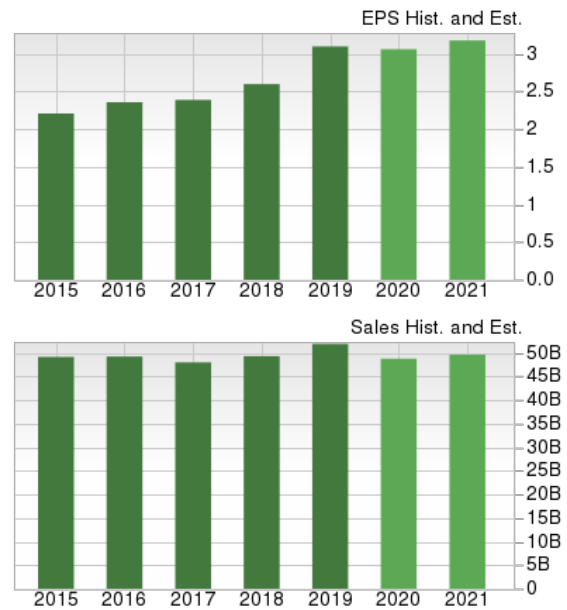
Security includes products and services preventing unauthorized access to system resources and protecting from worms, spam, viruses and other malware. The Data Center product category includes Cisco Unified Computing System (UCS) and Server Access Virtualization. It also comprises of The Other products segment and Related Services.

Cisco realigns its reporting segments into four distinct categories – infrastructure platform, applications, security, and other products.

On Oct 28, 2018, Cisco concluded the divestiture of its Service Provider Video Software Solutions (SPVSS) business. SPVSS included digital STBs and media technology products for reception, encoding, transcoding, translating, multiplexing, switching and modulation.

Total revenue was \$51.74 billion in fiscal 2019. The Americas, EMEA and APJC generated 59.6%, 25.2% and 15.2% of total revenues, respectively.

The company competes in the networking and communications equipment markets with companies like Amazon Web Services, Check Point Software Technologies, Dell, F5 Networks, FireEye, Fortinet, Hewlett-Packard Enterprise Company, Juniper Networks and Microsoft Corporation, to name few.



Reasons To Buy:

- ▲ Cisco is the largest player in the networking space. The company has a strong presence in the router and switch market. It also retained a leadership position in WLAN and Ethernet switching. Moreover, expansion into relatively under-penetrated markets is expected to drive growth.
- ▲ Cisco's focus on wireless carriers has increased of late, as evidenced by acquisitions such as Intucell, BroadHop, Cognitive Security, Cariden, ClearAccess and Ubiquisis. With data demand exploding, the wireless carrier segment has grown in importance. Mobile carriers in the U.S. are increasingly looking to make their networks more spectrum-efficient and put their network resources to use without having to materially increase capex expenditure. Also, the proliferation of smartphones has caused mobile data traffic to grow exponentially and the advent of high-speed LTE networks is likely to accelerate that growth. Therefore, networking solutions that allow carriers to manage traffic efficiently are to become increasingly important in the coming years. Cisco intends to tap this market by adding network management solutions to its product portfolio and broadening its relationship with carriers. The increased carrier focus might help Cisco to gain share in the edge routing segment, where its competitors, Juniper and Alcatel Lucent, have substantial market share. Moreover, these acquisitions have diversified Cisco's revenue source. Increasing recurring nature of the top line is a major growth factor.
- ▲ In order to counter the threat of SDN, Cisco has devised a strategy of its own, which it is referring to as Application Centric Infrastructure (ACI). ACI is a comprehensive approach that ties together physical and virtual compute, network and storage by leveraging centralized policies and orchestration. ACI is made up of new hardware in the Nexus 9000 portfolio and software in the shape of an updated NX-OS operating system along with the Application Policy Infrastructure Controller (APIC). The solution streamlines operational processes and reduces operating expenses for power, cooling and cabling. This reduces the total cost of ownership by 75% when compared with software-only network virtualization. The technology ensures the infrastructure is focused on the application. Nexus 9000 Series switches deliver high scalability, performance and energy in a compact form factor and are ideal for data center aggregation- and access-layer deployments in enterprise, service provider, and cloud networks. It is quite encouraging to see that Cisco's ACI technology is gaining significant traction with customers.
- ▲ The company has pioneered a network system, which has been referred to as the Unified Computing System (UCS). This blade server system based on x86 architecture is transforming data centers. The system lowers the cost of ownership by making the entire data center more network-centric, significantly reducing the number of computers/servers required. The UCS is intended to simplify the operation of the data center, improving its flexibility and scalability. For this purpose, the company has tied up with Accenture, BMC, EMC, Intel, Microsoft, NetApp, Novell, Oracle, Red Hat and VMWare. Notably, UCS adoption is increasing owing to the inherent cost advantage and the growing number of data centers across the world. This is working in Cisco's favor. UCS remains a major factor to Cisco's future success as the company builds its Next Generation Data Center stack.
- ▲ Cisco has inked strategic alliances with most of major technology companies globally. These partnerships have increased access to new technology, helped in developing innovative products, facilitated joint sales & marketing programs, and expanded total addressable market (TAM). The company has strategic partnerships with Apple, IBM, Microsoft, Viacom, Telenor, Google and Alibaba, which are expected to aid the company in enhancing business opportunities. We believe partnerships will help Cisco in winning new customers in the long haul.
- ▲ Management execution has been good in recent times. The solid net-cash balance of \$11.07 billion as of Jan 25, 2020, provides the flexibility required to pursue any growth strategy, whether by way of acquisitions or otherwise. Notably, debt-to-equity stands at 40.8% lower than prior quarter's 42.1%. Moreover, the strong balance sheet helps Cisco to continue shareholder friendly initiatives of share repurchase and dividend hike. Notably, lower number of outstanding shares helps bottom-line. In the fiscal first quarter, Cisco returned \$2.4 billion to shareholders through share buybacks and dividends. The company has \$11.8 billion remaining under its current share buyback program.

Order growth in new markets of the company remain encouraging and we are positive about the company's market position, innovative prowess, product range, growth initiatives and dividend payouts.

Reasons To Sell:

- ▼ Cisco continues to acquire a large number of companies. While this improves revenue opportunities, it increases integration risks. Moreover, we also note that the large acquisitions negatively impact the balance sheet in the form of high level of goodwill, which totaled \$33.61 billion or 37.2% of total assets as of Jan 25, 2020.
- ▼ Cisco has been forced to offer discounts and deals in response to actions by peers due to stiff competition from Arista Networks, Juniper, HPE and Huawei, in Ethernet switch and router market. Cisco's competitors are revamping their product lines with faster and power-efficient products. Although the edge business remains strong, the competitive pressure at the core remains intense and is likely to hurt profitability.
- ▼ One of the primary markets that Cisco serves is federal, state and local governments. Therefore, the company is widely exposed to the stringent budget activities of the U.S. government, which remains a major concern.
- ▼ Moreover, Cisco generates significant portion of revenues from outside the United States (40.4% of total revenues in fiscal 2019), subjecting the company to exchange rate volatility. Unfavorable movement in exchange rates of foreign currencies like renminbi, euro, pound sterling, Costa Rican colon, and yen related to the U.S. dollar can adversely impact results and undermine its growth potential to some extent. Weakness in service provider business in China, is a headwind. Moreover, imposition of tariffs owing to trade war between the United States and China is anticipated to affect growth prospects. The uncertainty over the trade war truce has impacted investors' confidence and is likely to remain an overhang on the company's performance.

Cisco is facing integration risks as well as stiff competition from smaller players.

Last Earnings Report

Cisco Beat Q2 Earnings Estimates, Near Term Outlook Grim

Cisco Systems reported second-quarter fiscal 2020 non-GAAP earnings of 77 cents per share that beat the Zacks Consensus Estimate by 1.3% and grew 5.5% year over year.

However, revenues declined 3.5% year over year to \$12 billion but surpassed the consensus mark by 0.2%.

The company blamed lower customer spending due to several reasons, including macro-economic weakness, for sluggish results and third-quarter outlook.

Quarter Ending **01/2020**

Report Date	Feb 12, 2020
Sales Surprise	0.16%
EPS Surprise	1.32%
Quarterly EPS	0.77
Annual EPS (TTM)	3.22

Top-Line Details

Product revenues (72.2% of total revenues) declined 6.5% on a year-over-year basis to \$8.67 billion.

Service revenues (27.8% of total revenues) increased 5.1% to \$3.33 billion, driven by growth in software and solution services. Software subscriptions represent 72% of Cisco's software revenues.

Region-wise, the Americas, the EMEA and the APJC revenues decreased 4.6%, 2.8% and 0.7% year over year, respectively. Total emerging markets declined 7% and the BRICs plus Mexico fell 20%.

In terms of customer segments, public sector revenues were flat. Commercial, enterprise and service provider revenues were down 4%, 7% and 11%, respectively.

Total product orders were down 6% on a year-over-year basis.

Segment Details

Infrastructure Platforms (54.4% of total revenues) comprise Switching, NGN routing, Wireless and Data Center solutions. Revenues fell 8% year over year to \$6.53 billion.

Routing declined due to weakness in service provider. Switching declined in both campus and data center end markets. However, Cisco witnessed strong demand for Catalyst 9000 family of switches and Nexus 9K solutions.

Additionally, wireless revenues declined overall despite strong growth in Meraki. Data Center revenues decreased due to weakness in servers, partially offset by strong growth in HyperFlex.

Applications (11.2% of total revenues) consist of the Collaboration portfolio of Unified Communications (UC), Conferencing and TelePresence, IoT, and application software businesses such as AppDynamics and Jasper.

Revenues decreased 8% year over year to almost \$1.35 billion due to a decline in UC, partially negated by double-digit growth at AppDynamics.

Security revenues (6.2% of revenues) improved 9% to \$748 million. The growth can be attributed to solid demand witnessed by identity and access, advanced threat, and unified threat management solutions.

Cisco witnessed strong demand for cloud-based solutions, including Duo and Umbrella. The company's differentiated end-to-end approach across the network, cloud and endpoints has helped it expand the clientele. Management stated that 100% of the Fortune 100 are now using one or more of Cisco's security solutions.

Other Products segment contains service provider video, cloud and system management, and various emerging technology offerings. Revenues surged 110% to \$46 million.

Partnership & Product Details

Cisco's integration with Microsoft's Azure Virtual WAN and Office 365, and a deeper partnership with Amazon cloud arm Amazon Web Services have prepared it to deliver highly secure end-to-end connectivity and better application performance. This is likely to help Cisco sell more of its SD-WAN solutions as customers move more applications to the cloud.

Moreover, during the quarter, the company introduced Cisco Silicon One and the Cisco 8000 carrier-class router family built on Silicon One. It also unveiled the iOS XR7 operating system.

Further, Cisco expanded the security portfolio from the cloud to the edge. The company's integrated IoT architecture, which comprises new software-based security solutions Cyber Vision and Edge Intelligence data collection tool, provides enhanced visibility, insights and threat detection across customers' entire environment.

Operating Details

Non-GAAP gross margin expanded 230 bps from the year-ago quarter to 66.4%. On a non-GAAP basis, product gross margin expanded 310 bps but service gross margin was unchanged year over year.

Non-GAAP operating expenses were \$3.93 billion, down 1.1% year over year. As a percentage of revenues, operating expenses increased 80 bps to 32.7%.

Non-GAAP operating margin expanded 150 bps year over year to 33.7%.

Balance Sheet and Cash Flow

As of Jan 25, 2020, Cisco's cash & cash equivalents and investments balance were \$27.06 billion, down from \$28 billion as of Oct 27, 2019.

Total debt, as of Jan 25, was \$15.99 billion compared with \$18.50 billion, as of Oct 27.

Operating cash flow was \$3.8 billion, flat year over year

Remaining performance obligations (RPO) at the end of the reported quarter were \$24.9 billion, up 11%. The metric represents total committed non-cancelable future revenues.

In the fiscal second quarter, Cisco returned \$2.4 billion to shareholders through share buybacks and dividends. The company has \$11.8 billion remaining under its current share buyback program.

Moreover, Cisco announced a penny increase in the dividend to 36 cents per share.

Acquisitions

In early third quarter, Cisco completed its acquisition of Exablaze, a designer and manufacturer of advanced network devices, to reduce latency and improve network performance.

Q3 Guidance

For third-quarter fiscal 2020, revenues are expected to decline 1.5-3.5% on a year-over-year basis.

Non-GAAP gross margin is expected in the range of 64.5-65.5%, while operating margin is anticipated between 32.5% and 33.5% for the quarter.

Non-GAAP earnings are anticipated between 79 cents and 81 cents per share.

Recent News

On Apr 14, Cisco announced a new Business Resiliency Program, which includes \$2.5 billion in financing, that will be offered via Cisco Capital, to aid businesses alleviate coronavirus crisis-induced financial challenges.

On Apr 6, Cisco announced its plans to acquire New York-based wireless tech company — Fluidmesh Networks. The acquisition of Fluidmesh is anticipated to strengthen Cisco's Industrial IoT portfolio and enable it to address growing demand for IoT based solutions in the market. Nevertheless, the financial terms of the deal have been kept under wraps. The deal is expected to be completed by fourth-quarter fiscal 2020.

On Apr 3, per a Reuters report, Cisco Webex video conferencing app recorded 324 million users in March — more than double user growth in the United States — with people being asked to work from home as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Usage growth in Europe and Asia-Pacific was four times and 3.5 times, respectively. Notably, the app reported around 73 million meetings in March with more than 22 million of them taking place per week in the last two weeks of the month.

On Mar 3, Cisco announced that it expanded cloud-driven solutions portfolio for small business buyers. The portfolio now includes solutions like Cisco Business Wireless Mobile App and Meraki Cloud-managed Smart Cameras.

On Feb 27, Cisco announced that it inked a partnership deal with Oxbotica to enable seamless sharing of high-volume data in the autonomous vehicle space via its OpenRoaming initiative that offers an ability to unlock solutions to the large data transfer challenge for autonomous vehicle fleets.

On Feb 24, Cisco unveiled the industry's most integrated cloud-native security platform, Cisco SecureX.

On Jan 28, Cisco enhanced Webex Assistant for Webex Meetings with new AI-powered voice intelligence capabilities, facilitated by the recent Voicea acquisition.

Valuation

Cisco shares are down 13.3% in the year-to-date period and 22.8% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry and the Zacks Computer & Technology sector are down 13.5% and 4.8% in the year-to-date period. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry is down 22.7%, while the sector is up 4.7%.

The S&P 500 index is down 11.5% in the year-to-date period and 1.7% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 12.98X forward 12-month earnings, which compares to 14.76X for the Zacks sub-industry, 22.32X for the Zacks sector and 20.18X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 19.8X and as low as 10.48X, with a 5-year median of 15.05X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in line with the market. Our \$43 price target reflects 13.64X forward 12-month earnings.

The table below shows summary valuation data for CSCO

Valuation Multiples - CSCO					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	12.98	14.76	22.32	20.18
	5-Year High	19.8	19.21	22.32	20.18
	5-Year Low	10.48	11.26	16.71	15.19
	5-Year Median	15.05	15.18	19.23	17.44
P/S F12M	Current	3.51	3.21	3.41	3.19
	5-Year High	5.19	4.3	3.59	3.44
	5-Year Low	2.28	2.36	2.32	2.54
	5-Year Median	3.48	3.28	3.1	3.01
EV/Sales TTM	Current	3.12	2.8	3.8	2.81
	5-Year High	4.48	4.03	4.44	3.45
	5-Year Low	1.5	1.46	2.58	2.16
	5-Year Median	2.68	2.52	3.57	2.82

As of 05/01/2020

Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Top 26% (66 out of 253)



Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Amazon.com, Inc. (AMZN)	Neutral	3
Check Point Software Technologies Ltd. (CHKP)	Neutral	3
F5 Networks, Inc. (FFIV)	Neutral	3
Juniper Networks, Inc. (JNPR)	Neutral	3
Microsoft Corporation (MSFT)	Neutral	2
NVIDIA Corporation (NVDA)	Neutral	3
Palo Alto Networks, Inc. (PANW)	Neutral	3
VMware, Inc. (VMW)	Neutral	4

Industry Comparison Industry: Computer - Networking				Industry Peers		
	CSCO	X Industry	S&P 500	AMZN	JNPR	VMW
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	3	3	4
VGM Score	A	-	-	A	C	D
Market Cap	173.54 B	97.88 M	20.61 B	1,139.65 B	7.22 B	52.39 B
# of Analysts	12	2	14	13	8	11
Dividend Yield	3.52%	0.00%	2.11%	0.00%	3.67%	0.00%
Value Score	B	-	-	D	C	D
Cash/Price	0.15	0.17	0.06	0.05	0.25	0.05
EV/EBITDA	9.65	9.50	11.87	32.16	11.01	22.69
PEG Ratio	1.92	3.04	2.47	3.52	1.93	1.27
Price/Book (P/B)	4.88	1.45	2.67	18.34	1.58	7.47
Price/Cash Flow (P/CF)	12.32	9.37	10.66	36.90	11.43	19.69
P/E (F1)	13.42	17.17	19.01	81.55	14.16	20.77
Price/Sales (P/S)	3.37	1.67	2.10	3.85	1.63	5.12
Earnings Yield	7.48%	1.27%	5.05%	1.23%	7.06%	4.81%
Debt/Equity	0.41	0.14	0.72	0.38	0.37	0.53
Cash Flow (\$/share)	3.44	0.39	7.01	67.05	1.89	6.68
Growth Score	C	-	-	A	F	C
Hist. EPS Growth (3-5 yrs)	8.60%	-1.66%	10.88%	110.19%	-0.59%	14.59%
Proj. EPS Growth (F1/F0)	-1.18%	23.98%	-7.32%	21.83%	-10.39%	-3.29%
Curr. Cash Flow Growth	6.95%	23.87%	5.92%	31.33%	-8.77%	0.87%
Hist. Cash Flow Growth (3-5 yrs)	3.53%	20.94%	8.55%	49.26%	-15.41%	13.69%
Current Ratio	1.81	2.34	1.23	1.10	2.08	0.65
Debt/Capital	28.97%	13.98%	43.84%	27.39%	26.75%	34.84%
Net Margin	21.44%	-1.50%	11.08%	3.56%	7.53%	62.27%
Return on Equity	36.40%	2.50%	16.44%	18.46%	8.83%	40.10%
Sales/Assets	0.55	0.89	0.54	1.44	0.50	0.49
Proj. Sales Growth (F1/F0)	-5.99%	0.00%	-1.42%	20.73%	-3.61%	12.37%
Momentum Score	A	-	-	A	A	B
Daily Price Chg	-2.22%	0.00%	-2.39%	4.27%	-6.37%	-2.56%
1 Week Price Chg	0.09%	0.54%	-1.74%	1.48%	3.19%	-6.09%
4 Week Price Chg	6.48%	17.50%	17.07%	28.93%	9.87%	11.27%
12 Week Price Chg	-12.96%	-15.46%	-18.53%	20.67%	-6.57%	-16.50%
52 Week Price Chg	-22.86%	-15.63%	-9.82%	30.15%	-22.50%	-34.24%
20 Day Average Volume	21,700,674	29,232	2,641,413	5,808,662	4,129,817	1,317,672
(F1) EPS Est 1 week change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.23%	0.00%	0.00%
(F1) EPS Est 4 week change	-2.92%	-2.92%	-6.62%	2.24%	0.00%	-5.38%
(F1) EPS Est 12 week change	-6.19%	-40.00%	-13.28%	1.69%	-11.61%	-28.23%
(Q1) EPS Est Mthly Chg	-5.31%	-0.88%	-11.97%	-6.53%	0.00%	-2.57%

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	B
Growth Score	C
Momentum Score	A
VGM Score	A

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

Disclosures

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