

Dominos Pizza, Inc.(DPZ)

\$403.21 (As of 10/14/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$428.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

Zacks Recommendation:

Neutral

(Since: 08/10/20)

Prior Recommendation: Outperform

Short Term: 1-3 Months

Zacks Rank: (1-5)

3-Hold

Zacks Style Scores:

VGM:B

Value: D

Growth: A

Momentum: C

Summary

Shares of Domino's have outperformed the industry so far this year. Recently, the company reported third-quarter 2020 results, wherein earnings missed the Zacks Consensus Estimate while revenues beat the same. However, both top and bottom lines improved 17.9% and 21.5% on a year over year basis. Notably, the company has been benefiting from a solid digital ordering system and higher global retail sales. Also, increased investment in technology-driven initiatives bode well. The extended ways to order a pizza have thus kept Domino's at the forefront of digital ordering and customer convenience. Earnings estimates for 2020 have increased over the past 30 days, reflecting analysts' optimism regarding company's growth potential. However, the coronavirus-related woes persist. Moreover, the company's high debt-level woes linger.

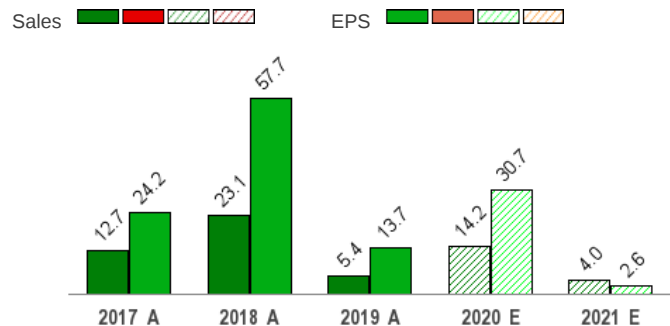
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	\$435.58 - \$251.80
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	897,268
Market Cap	\$16.1 B
Year-To-Date Price Change	38.8%
Beta	0.33
Dividend / Dividend Yield	\$3.12 / 0.8%
Industry	Retail - Restaurants
Zacks Industry Rank	Top 30% (77 out of 254)

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	-9.5%
Last Sales Surprise	2.3%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	-2.2%
Expected Report Date	02/18/2021
Earnings ESP	-1.8%

Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	979 E	951 E	994 E	1,378 E	4,299 E
2020	873 A	920 A	968 A	1,375 E	4,133 E
2019	836 A	812 A	821 A	1,150 A	3,619 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	\$2.93 E	\$2.89 E	\$2.95 E	\$4.31 E	\$12.84 E
2020	\$3.07 A	\$2.99 A	\$2.49 A	\$3.86 E	\$12.51 E
2019	\$2.20 A	\$2.19 A	\$2.05 A	\$3.13 A	\$9.57 A

*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

P/E TTM	34.9
P/E F1	32.2
PEG F1	2.2
P/S TTM	4.1

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and Sales estimates, is as of 10/14/2020. The reports text is as of 10/15/2020.

Overview

Founded in 1960, Domino's Pizza Inc., which delivers pizzas under the Domino's Pizza brand, is a top player in the Quick-Service Restaurant or QSR Pizza category.

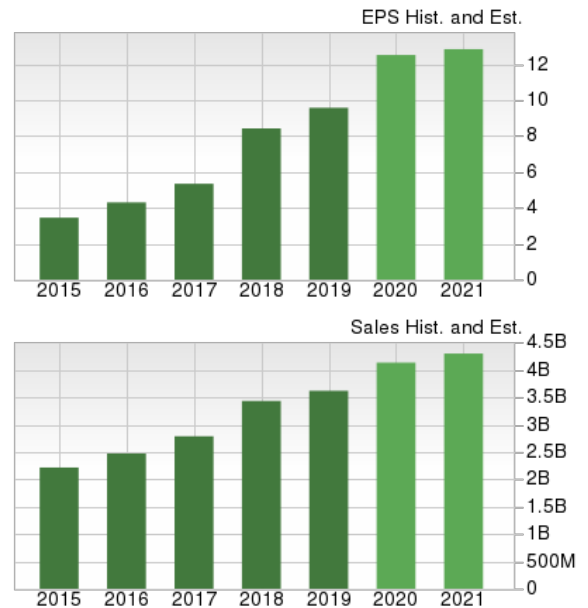
Through its subsidiaries, the company operates as a pizza delivery company in the United States and internationally, with over 17,200 locations in more than 90 markets.

The company operates and reports through the following three business segments: U.S. stores, international franchise and supply chain.

U.S. stores (35.1% of total revenues in fiscal third-quarter 2020): The segment primarily consists of franchised stores but also have company-owned stores, which are used as sites for promotion of new products and improvement of operational efficiencies. As of Sep 6, 2020, the company owned and operated 6,239 stores across the United States.

International franchise (5.6%): Domino's has a network of franchised stores in more than 90 international markets. As of Sep 6, 2020, the company had 11,017 international franchise stores. Revenues at this segment primarily gains from royalty payments generated by retail sales from franchised stores. Notably, most of the company's international stores operate under master franchise agreements.

Supply chain (59.3%): The segment operates 19 regional dough manufacturing as well as food supply chain centers in the United States. It also has a center each for thin crust manufacturing, vegetable processing, and providing equipment and supplies to our U.S. and certain international stores.



Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Buy:

▲ **Strong Brand Image:** The pizza category is a fast-growing segment in the U.S. quick-service restaurant industry and Domino's is one of the largest pizza chains globally. In the United States, the company is the market leader in the delivery segment. Domestically, third-quarter 2020 marked the 38th consecutive quarter of positive same-store sales. During the quarter, U.S. comps benefited from increase in both ticket and order growth. Domino's strong brand positioning through its versatile promotions portray it as a brand producing fresh high-quality pizzas, which are delivered on time.

Domino's solid digital ordering system, robust international expansion and other sales initiatives should continue to drive growth.

▲ **Solid International Expansion:** Since Domino's generates a chunk of its revenues from outside the United States, the company remains committed to accelerating presence in high-growth international markets to boost business. Meanwhile, the company's international growth continues to be strong and diversified across markets, courtesy of exceptional unit level economics. Notably, third-quarter 2020 marked the 107th consecutive quarter of positive same-store sales in its international business. Improvement in comps can be attributed to ticket growth. The company inaugurated 83 (44 net U.S. stores and 39 net new international stores) global net store openings during third-quarter 2020.

Many international franchisees continue generating robust returns. Countries like China, Japan and Germany have been posting solid growth. Meanwhile, markets in India and Spain are working diligently to revive operations through store re-openings.

▲ **Franchising Strategy Safeguards Earnings:** Domino's has a wide franchise network, both domestically and internationally. Reducing its ownership of restaurants and focusing more on re-franchising minimizes the company's capital requirements and facilitates earnings per share growth and ROE expansion. In addition, free cash flow continues to grow, thus allowing reinvestment for increasing brand recognition and shareholder return. In fact, the company has increased dividend by 25%, 24%, 23%, 21%, 20% and 20% in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019, respectively, after initiating regular dividends in 2013. Moreover, Domino's is less susceptible to food inflation courtesy of franchising compared to other pizza companies with global operations. Meanwhile, the company's recapitalization deal also makes cash available for potential special dividend and share repurchases, subject to the board's approval. During fiscal third quarter, the company announced quarterly cash dividend of 78 cents, to be paid out on Dec 30, 2020 to shareholders on record as of Dec 15.

▲ **Initiatives to Boost Sales:** Domino's continues bolstering sales through regular limited time offers (LTO). Meanwhile, the company's remodeling efforts have gained momentum leading to sales improvement over the past few quarters. The company is on track to convert all of its restaurants to the "Pizza Theater" prototype, which offers a comfy lobby, open-area viewing of the food preparation process and the ability to track carryout orders electronically on a lobby screen. Domino's remodeling initiative is thus anticipated to continue enhancing its potential as a brand and augment guest experience. Notably, the company continues to innovate aggressively across all aspects of its business - including GPS, e-bikes, AI in-store technology, great food, and an evolving digital experience. During third-quarter 2020, the company rolled out GPS technology in approximately 90% of its U.S. stores.

In terms of menu additions, the company rolled out some new products. The company launched new chicken wings with improved sauces on Jul 7. It also unveiled two new specialty pizzas, namely Cheeseburger pizza and Chicken Taco pizza, on Aug 24. Notably, the items have been witnessing positive customer feedback.

▲ **Digitalization to Drive growth:** Domino's is investing heavily in technology-driven initiatives like digital ordering to boost sales. It has started driverless pizza delivery services in Houston, TX. To this end, the company has partnered with Nuro — a robotic company for the delivery services. The driverless pizza delivery services can be only be availed by select residents of Texas. The service has been underway in the Houston metro area since March 2019 and will further expand Nuro's autonomous delivery operations. During the first-quarter 2020 conference call, the company announced that it moved to 100% contactless delivery model across the United States. Meanwhile, Domino's digital loyalty program -- Piece of the Pie Rewards -- continues to contribute significantly to traffic gains. The extended ways to order a pizza has thus kept Domino's at the forefront of digital ordering and customer convenience. Moreover, other digital enhancements in terms of ordering, selecting service methods, paying and tipping were implemented to boost consumer experience.

During the second quarter of 2020, the company initiated car-side delivery, enabling convenient and contact-free carryout experience for its customers. During the third quarter, Domino's franchisees overwhelmingly accepted it, thereby rolling out the services at 95% of its U.S. stores. Apart from this, enhanced make-line tools are being rolled out to ensure faster and improved service levels. These tools are available at 80% of the U.S. stores.

Reasons To Sell:

- ▼ **Coronavirus Impact:** In view of the unprecedented impact of coronavirus on its business and the Retail - Restaurants industry, the company has withdrawn fiscal 2020 guidance. As of Sep 6, 2020, fewer than 400 international stores were temporarily closed, owing to the crisis. Nonetheless, owing to the uncertain and dynamic nature of the crisis, the company continues to regularly monitor the pandemic, so as to operate and survive amid such trying times.
- ▼ **High Debt a Concern:** A strong balance sheet will help the company tide over the ongoing crisis. Although the company's long-term debt, as of Sep 6, 2020, stood at approximately \$4.1 billion (almost flat sequentially), its debt-to-capitalization came in at 459.1% compared with 469.4% at the end of Jun 14, 2020. Moreover, the company ended third-quarter fiscal 2020 with cash and cash equivalent of \$330.7 million, which may not be enough to manage the high debt level.
- ▼ **Industry Susceptible to Consumer Discretionary Spending:** Domino's operates in the retail restaurant space that is highly dependent on consumer discretionary spending. Consumers' propensity to spend largely depends on the overall macroeconomic scenario. Although higher disposable income and increased wages are favoring the industry right now, it can change with the slightest disruption in the economy. The company, therefore, is highly vulnerable to the inconsistent nature of consumer discretionary spending. If it does not make pragmatic use of advanced technologies to innovate across value chains, it has high chances of fading out like many other restaurant retailers.
- ▼ **Currency Fluctuations May Hurt:** Domino's has considerable international presence and is therefore highly vulnerable to fluctuations in exchange rates. Strengthening of the dollar against certain currencies, including the British pound, is likely to impact the company's results. In 2017 and 2018, foreign currency had a respective \$1 million and \$1.1 million negative impact on royalty revenues. For 2020, the company expects foreign currency impact to be flat to negative \$5 million on royalty revenues, compared to 2019.

The coronavirus pandemic, high debt and a tricky consumer-spending environment in the U.S. restaurant space remain potent headwinds.

Last Earnings Report

Domino's Lags Q3 Earnings, Beats Revenue Estimates

Domino's reported third-quarter 2020 results, with earnings missing the Zacks Consensus Estimate but revenues beating the same. Earnings missed the consensus estimate after beating the same for trailing six quarters, whereas revenues surpassed the estimate for the four straight quarters.

The company also reported robust U.S. same-store sales. The third quarter also marked the 38th straight quarter of positive U.S. comparable sales and the 107th consecutive quarter of positive international comps.

Domino's results in the quarter benefited from solid digital ordering system and higher global retail sales.

Earnings & Revenues Discussion

Adjusted earnings in the quarter under review were \$2.49 per share, which missed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of \$2.49. However, the reported figure improved 21.5% on a year-over-year basis. The bottom line was primarily driven by higher net income.

Quarterly revenues improved 17.9% year over year to \$967.7 million, which beat the consensus mark of \$946 million. Robust same-store sales and increase in store count (during the trailing four quarters) both in the United States and international markets drove third-quarter revenues. The company opened 728 stores in the trailing four quarters. In the third quarter, the company opened 83 stores, comprising 39 net new U.S. stores and 44 net new international stores. International franchise revenues also improved.

Comps

Global retail sales (including total sales of franchise and company-owned units) improved 14.4% year over year in the third quarter. The upside can primarily be attributed to growth in sales at domestic stores (up 21.3%) and at international stores (up 7.7%). Excluding foreign currency impact, global retail sales increased 14.8%.

In the third quarter, comps at Domino's domestic stores (including company-owned and franchise stores) improved 17.5%. Moreover, it was higher than the prior-year quarter's improvement of 2.4%.

At domestic company-owned stores, Domino's comps rose 16.6% year over year, higher than 1.7% in the year-ago quarter. Moreover, domestic franchise stores comps increased 17.5% compared with growth of 2.5% in the prior-year quarter.

Comps at international stores, excluding foreign currency translation, were up 6.2%. This was higher than improvement of 1.7% in the year-ago quarter.

Margins

Domino's operating margin contracted 110 basis points (bps) year over year to 37.4% in the reported quarter. Moreover, the net income margin contracted 30 bps to 10.2%.

Balance Sheet

As of Sep 6, 2020, cash and cash equivalents totaled \$330.7 million, up from \$190.6 million as of Dec 29, 2019. Long-term debt at the end of the third quarter was \$4,062.2 million, compared with \$4,071.1 million as of Dec 29, 2019. Inventory amounted to \$65.5 million at the end of the third quarter.

Cash flows from operating activities totaled \$370.4 million at the end of third quarter. In the quarter under review, Domino's incurred capital expenditures of \$51.2 million.

The company declared quarterly cash dividend of 78 cents, to be paid out on Dec 30, 2020 to shareholders on record as of Dec 15.

Quarter Ending	09/2020
Report Date	Oct 08, 2020
Sales Surprise	2.30%
EPS Surprise	-9.45%
Quarterly EPS	2.49
Annual EPS (TTM)	11.68

Valuation

Domino's shares are up 38.7% in year-to-date period and 59.5% in the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry are up 8.6% and the Zacks Retail-Wholesale sector is up by 40.4%, in the year-to-date period. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry was up 7%, while the sector was up 47.2%.

The S&P 500 index is up 9.8% in the year-to-date period and 18.2% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 31.54X forward 12-month earnings, which compares to 31.48X for the Zacks sub-industry, 33.31X for the Zacks sector and 22.95X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 38.3X and as low as 21.71X, with a 5-year median of 29.18X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in-line with the market. Our \$428 price target reflects 33.12X forward 12-months earnings.

The table below shows summary valuation data for DPZ.

Valuation Multiples - DPZ					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	31.54	31.48	33.31	22.95
	5-Year High	38.3	34.04	33.99	23.47
	5-Year Low	21.71	20.49	19.09	15.27
	5-Year Median	29.18	23.09	23.59	17.68
P/S F12M	Current	3.79	3.77	1.37	4.23
	5-Year High	4.05	3.93	1.37	4.31
	5-Year Low	2.38	2.81	0.84	3.18
	5-Year Median	3	3.34	1.01	3.67
EV/EBITDA TTM	Current	26.09	21.43	21.04	15.52
	5-Year High	27.77	21.43	21.04	15.68
	5-Year Low	16.67	10.64	10.7	9.55
	5-Year Median	21.68	14.39	12.98	13.09

As of 10/13/2020

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Top 30% (77 out of 254)



Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Jack In The Box Inc. (JACK)	Outperform	2
McDonalds Corporation (MCD)	Neutral	2
Papa Johns International, Inc. (PZZA)	Neutral	3
Red Robin Gourmet Burgers, Inc. (RRGB)	Neutral	2
Starbucks Corporation (SBUX)	Neutral	2
The Wendys Company (WEN)	Neutral	3
Yum Brands, Inc. (YUM)	Neutral	2
Yum China Holdings Inc. (YUMC)	Neutral	3

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

Industry Comparison Industry: Retail - Restaurants				Industry Peers		
	DPZ	X Industry	S&P 500	MCD	PZZA	YUM
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	2	3	2
VGM Score	B	-	-	D	A	D
Market Cap	16.06 B	535.08 M	23.57 B	169.17 B	2.71 B	28.94 B
# of Analysts	14	6	14	16	8	9
Dividend Yield	0.77%	0.00%	1.62%	2.20%	1.09%	1.96%
Value Score	D	-	-	D	D	D
Cash/Price	0.03	0.13	0.07	0.02	0.03	0.04
EV/EBITDA	28.13	13.10	13.59	18.65	40.75	19.76
PEG F1	2.19	4.28	2.90	5.28	6.94	2.46
P/B	NA	2.59	3.55	NA	NA	NA
P/CF	35.80	9.48	13.31	22.49	27.24	23.78
P/E F1	32.23	32.10	22.26	38.17	55.50	30.33
P/S TTM	4.11	1.08	2.66	8.79	1.60	5.27
Earnings Yield	3.07%	0.94%	4.36%	2.62%	1.80%	3.30%
Debt/Equity	-1.26	0.54	0.70	-3.66	-1.14	-1.39
Cash Flow (\$/share)	11.39	1.81	6.93	10.11	3.04	4.04
Growth Score	A	-	-	F	A	C
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	31.48%	2.98%	10.41%	10.16%	-18.64%	0.02%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	30.70%	-23.22%	-2.99%	-24.03%	27.35%	-10.83%
Current Cash Flow Growth	9.16%	3.60%	5.49%	-0.99%	8.17%	3.60%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	17.68%	4.61%	8.51%	1.88%	-2.98%	-6.71%
Current Ratio	1.96	1.01	1.35	0.91	0.98	1.63
Debt/Capital	NA%	52.36%	42.91%	NA	NA	NA
Net Margin	11.98%	-1.44%	10.28%	24.78%	1.32%	18.78%
Return on Equity	-14.11%	-10.64%	14.80%	-52.78%	-15.73%	-12.42%
Sales/Assets	2.62	0.87	0.51	0.40	2.30	0.97
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	14.22%	0.00%	-0.58%	-9.00%	11.66%	0.01%
Momentum Score	C	-	-	A	A	F
Daily Price Change	3.86%	-0.37%	-0.99%	0.55%	3.19%	0.03%
1-Week Price Change	-9.87%	2.48%	4.06%	0.97%	-4.06%	0.34%
4-Week Price Change	4.67%	0.42%	2.70%	2.24%	-4.00%	2.66%
12-Week Price Change	5.13%	16.87%	6.67%	17.81%	-11.85%	5.46%
52-Week Price Change	59.43%	-13.74%	5.15%	9.71%	55.80%	-13.74%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	897,268	322,745	2,058,127	2,707,624	795,973	1,506,787
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	-2.89%	0.00%	0.00%	1.49%	0.00%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	-2.18%	0.19%	0.00%	1.72%	0.19%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	10.29%	12.95%	3.53%	2.42%	17.09%	12.95%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	-3.51%	0.02%	0.00%	1.99%	2.06%	0.00%

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Zacks Stock Rating System

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

Zacks Recommendation

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

Zacks Rank

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

Zacks Style Scores

The Zacks Style Score is as a complementary indicator to the Zacks rating system, giving investors a way to focus on the highest rated stocks that best fit their own stock picking preferences.

Academic research has proven that stocks with the best Value, Growth and Momentum characteristics outperform the market. The Zacks Style Scores rate stocks on each of these individual styles and assigns a rating of A, B, C, D and F. We also produce the VGM Score (V for Value, G for Growth and M for Momentum), which combines the weighted average of the individual Style Scores into one score. This is perfectly suited for those who want their stocks to have the best scores across the board.

Value Score	D
Growth Score	A
Momentum Score	C
VGM Score	B

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

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

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

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Periods:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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